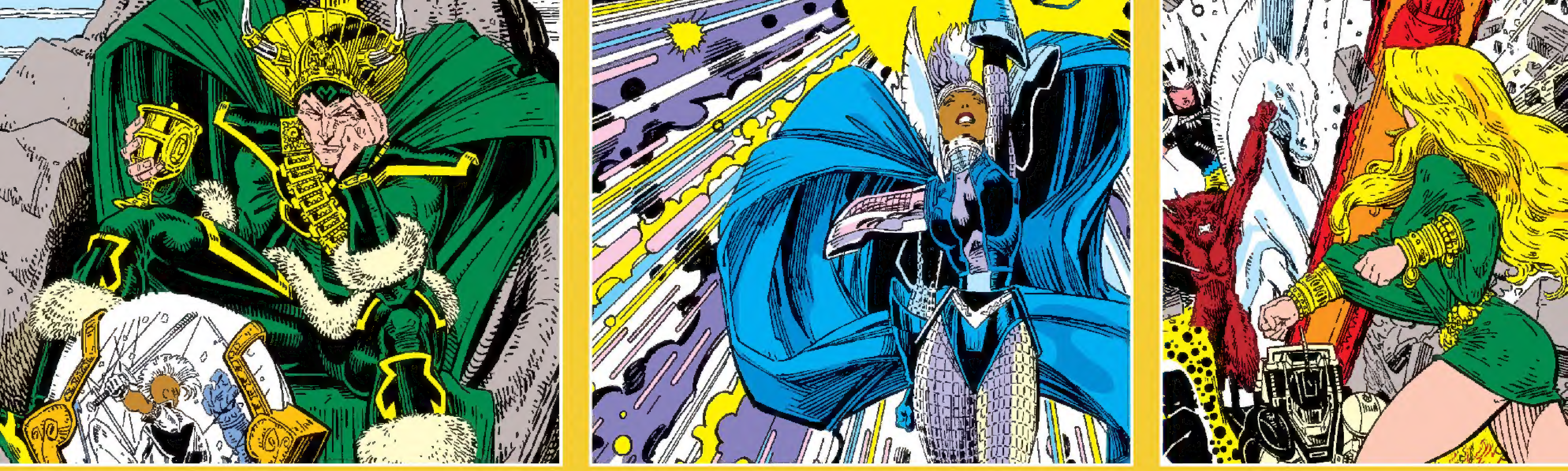
MARVEL

THE NEW MUTANTS® CLASSIC



THE NEW MUTANTS

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ALL NEW! 64 PAGES!
LOKI! STORM! ASGARDIAN ACTION! MUTANTS GALORE!

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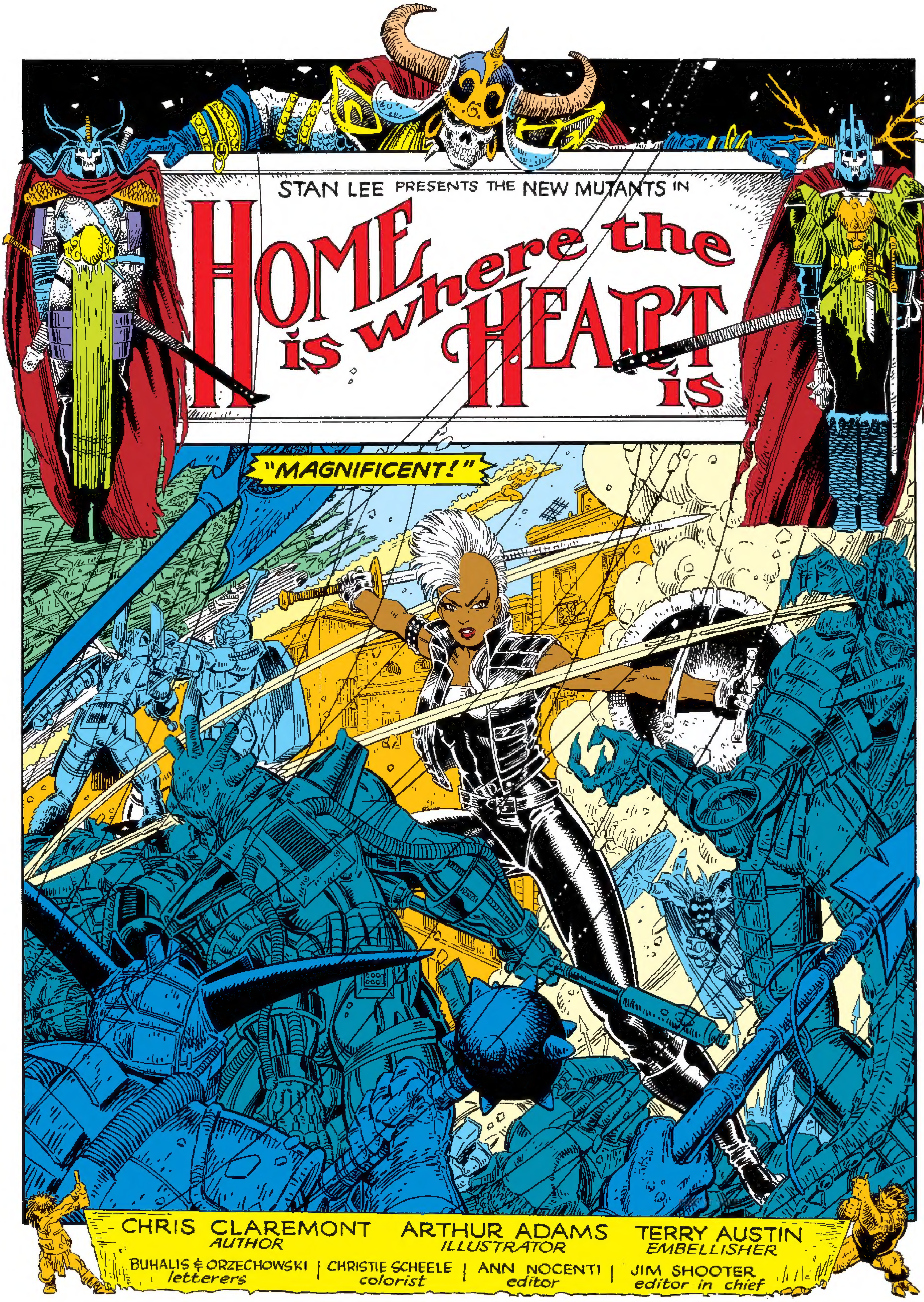
STAN LEE PRESENTS THE NEW MUTANTS IN
HOME is where the HEART is
"MAGNIFICENT!"
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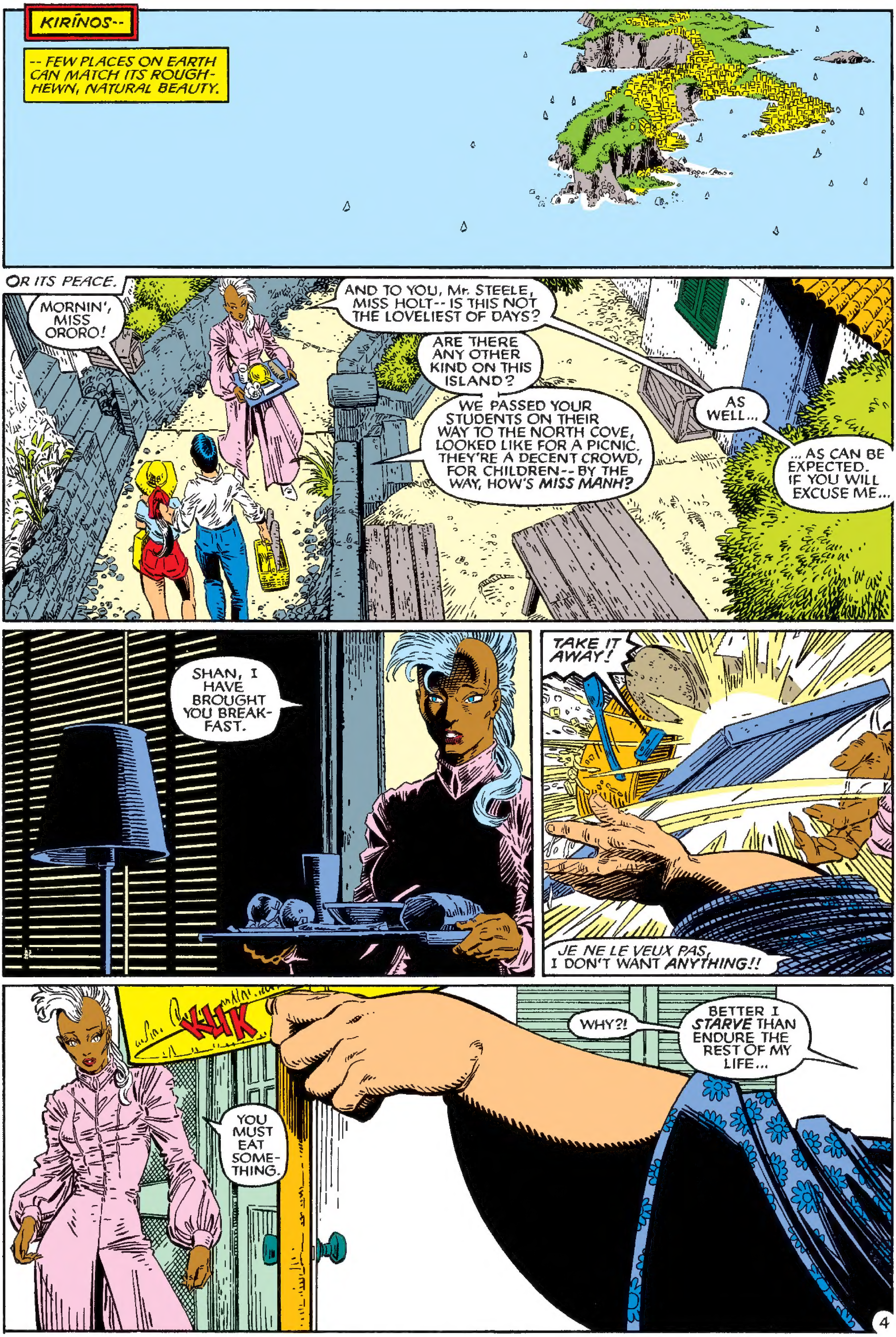
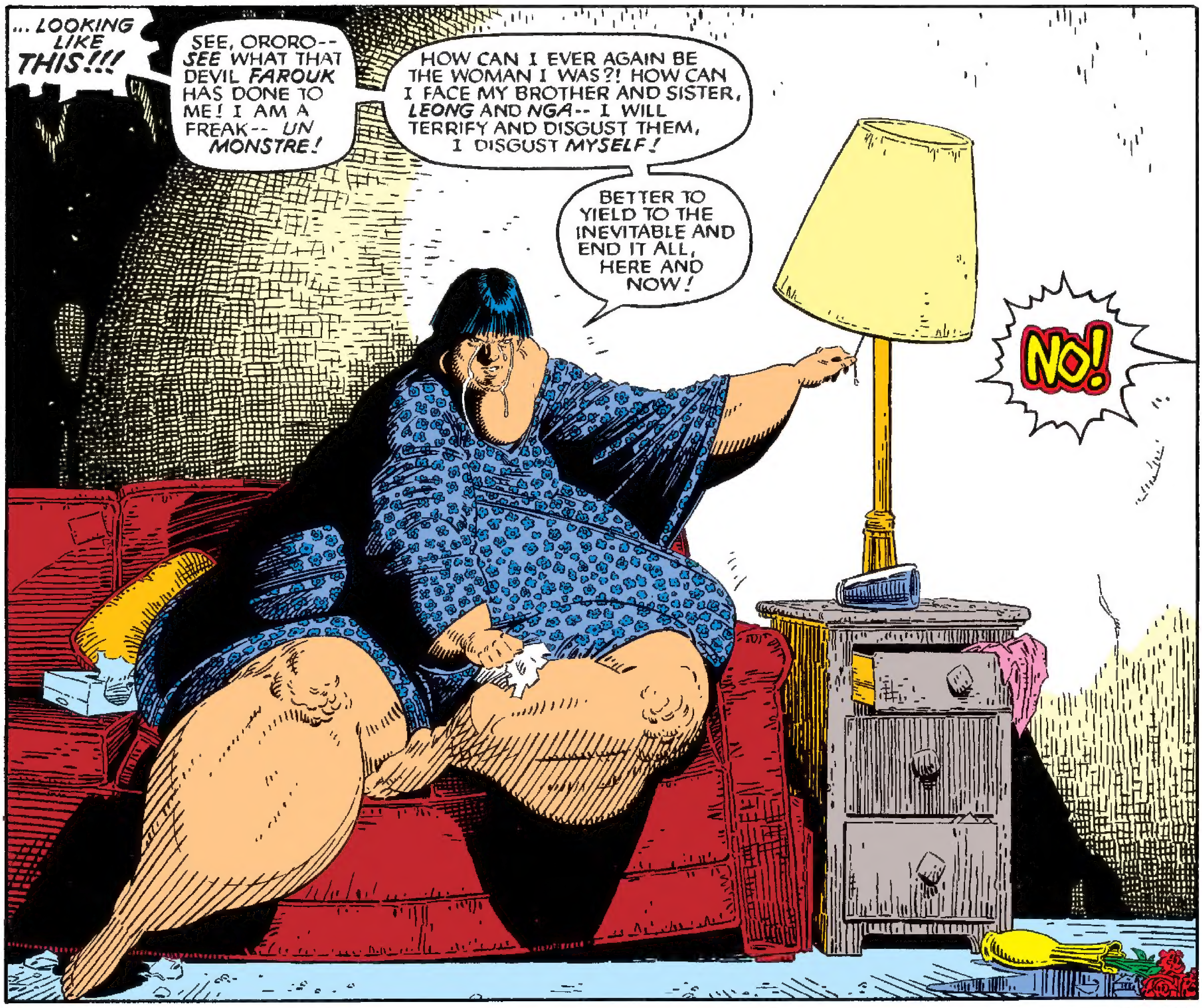
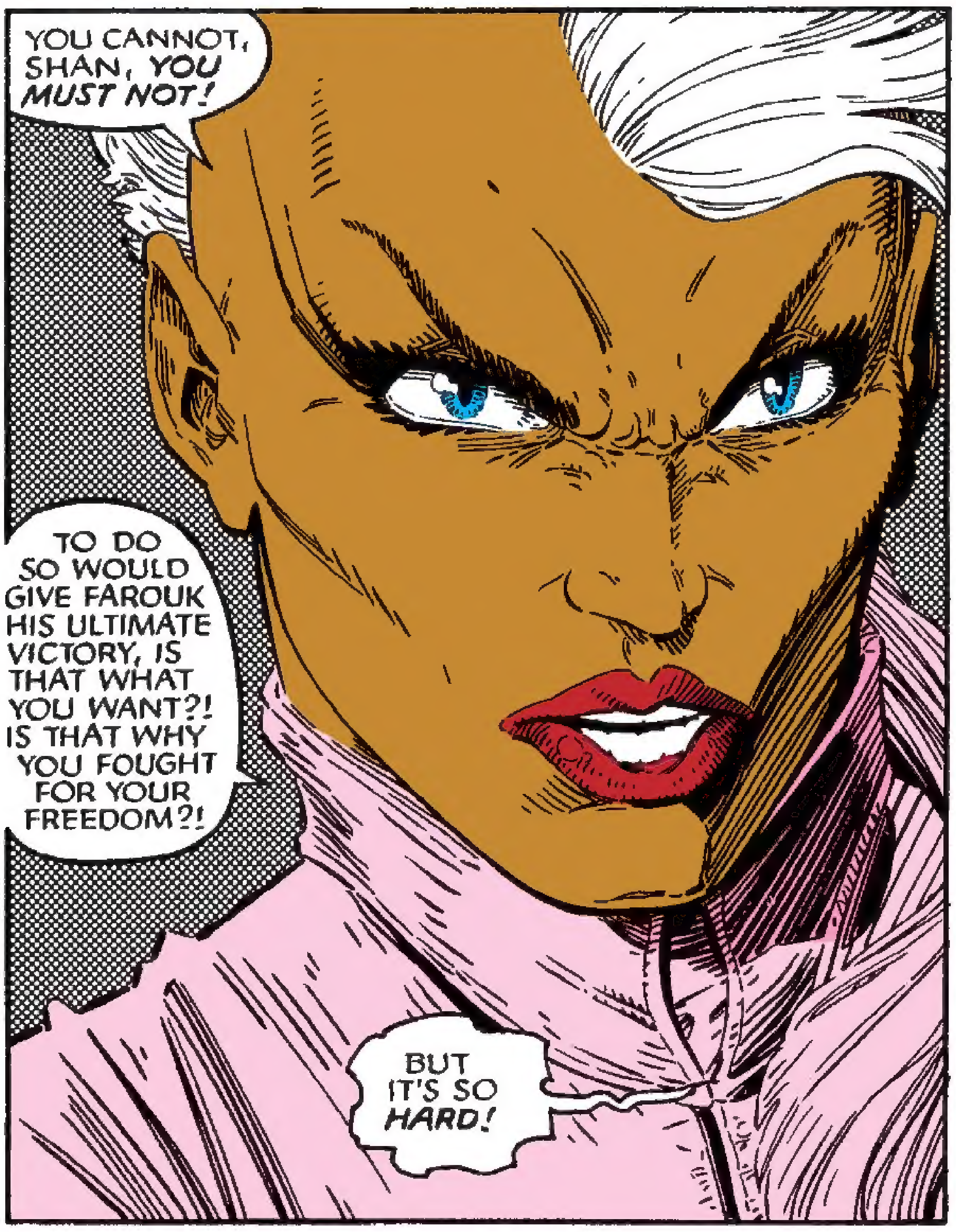
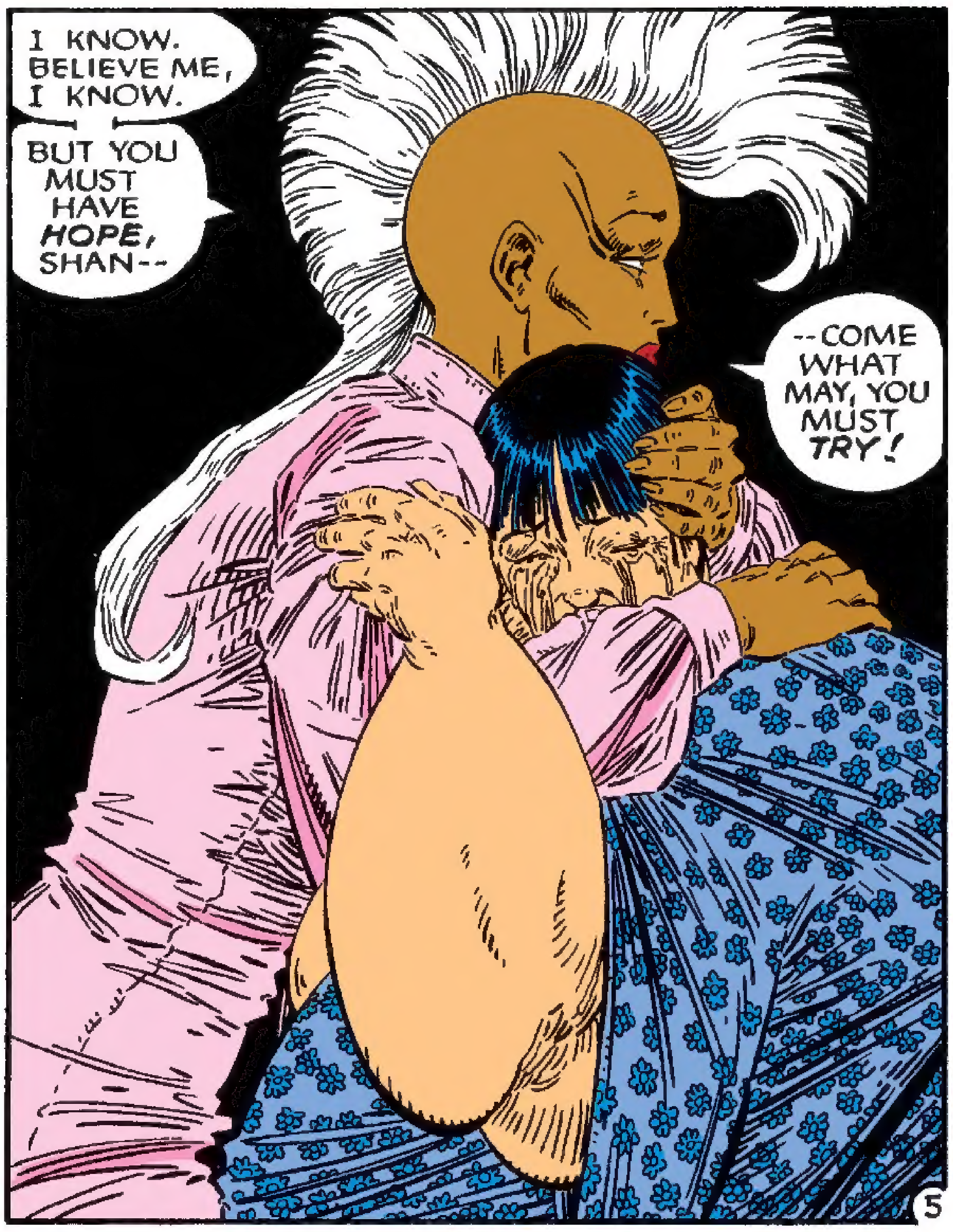
FROM HLIDSKJALF, THE HIGH SEAT-- GAZING THROUGH THE CRYSTAL OF VISION-- THE LORD OF ASGARD CAN SEE ALL THERE IS TO SEE ON THE NINE WORLDS OF MORTAL MEN. IN THIS INSTANCE, A REPLAY OF THE RECENT BATTLE IN NEW YORK BETWEEN THE ASGARDIAN HOST, THE HEROES OF EARTH AND THE DEMON HORDES OF SURTUR.
I BEGIN TO UNDERSTAND AT LAST THE FASCINATION THESE CREATURES HAVE FOR MY DOLTISH HALF-BROTHER, THOR.
THIS WOMAN, ORORO, HAS NO SPECIAL ABILITIES, YET SHE FIGHTS WITH A FIERCE COURAGE THAT WOULD DO THE LADY SIF PROUD.
HER NAME MEANS "BEAUTY" AND SHE IS IN TRUTH MOST PLEASING TO THE EYE, DESPITE HER DUSKY COLOR. LIKE ALL HEROES, SHE IS DEPRESSINGLY NOBLE...
...YET I SENSE WITHIN HER CONSIDERABLE PASSION, TOO LONG DENIED.
UNTIL RECENTLY, AS STORM, SHE LED A BAND OF MORTALS-- FROM THE OUTCAST CLAN CALLED MUTANTS-- KNOWN AS THE X-MEN. HER POWER TO CONTROL THE ELEMENTS ECHOES THOR'S-- BUT HERS HAS BEEN STOLEN, IT SEEMS FOREVER. SHE CANNOT FLY, POOR THING, WIND AND WEATHER ARE NO LONGER HERS TO COMMAND.
I WONDER WHAT PRICE SHE WOULD PAY TO GET THEM BACK...
...TO BECOME A GODDESS IN FACT AS WELL AS NAME?

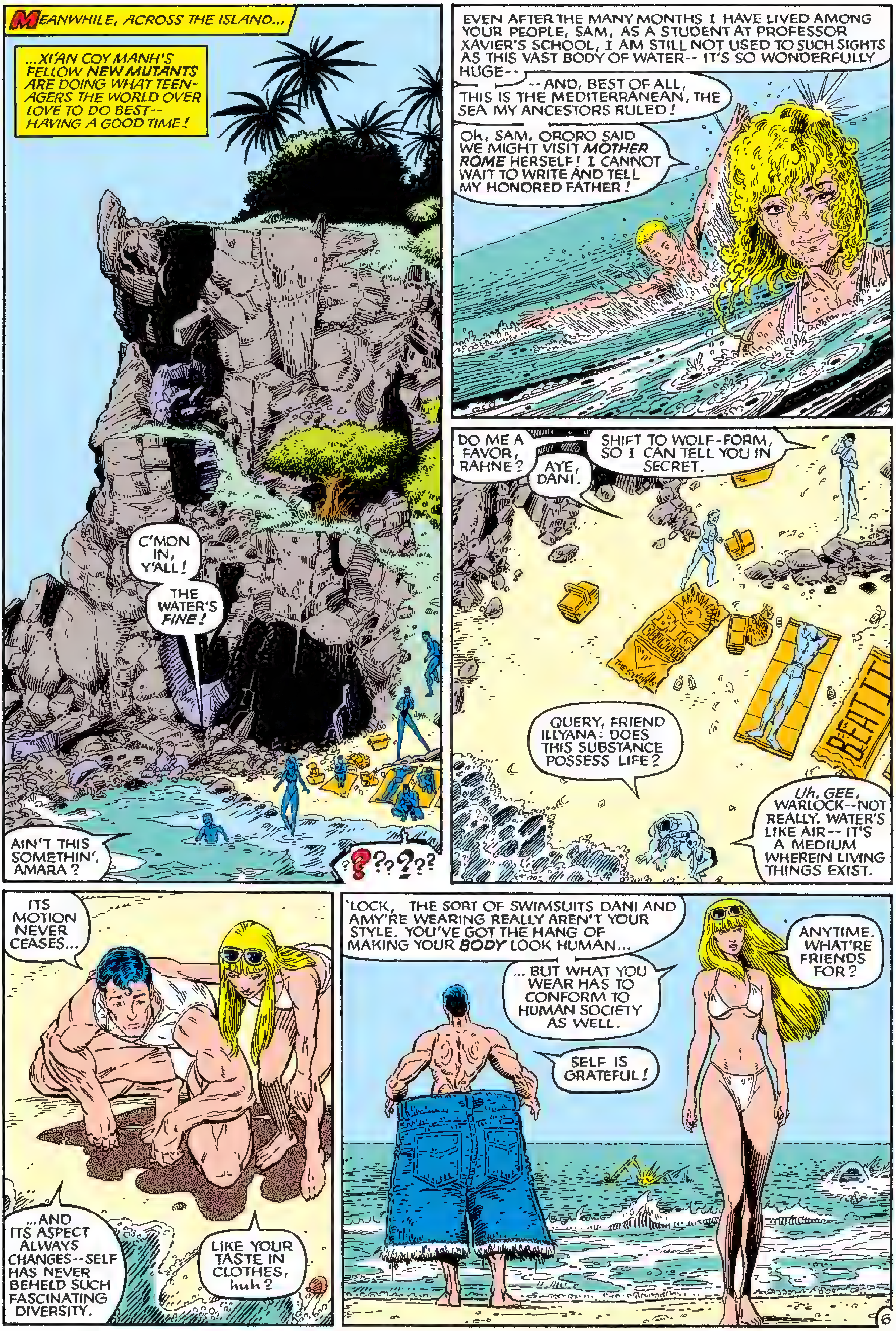
YOU WISHED TO SEE ME, **LOKI?**
ENCHANTRESS--
-- I HAVE A TASK FOR THEE.
I AM NO LACKEY, PRINCE OF EVIL--!
AND *I*, DESPITE MY REPUTATION, AM AS GENEROUS A FRIEND...
...AS I AM IMPLACABLE A FOE. WHICH, FAIR AMORA, WOULDST THOU HAVE ME BE?
FRIEND, MY LORD-- FOR NOW.
SPLENDID. JOURNEY FROM HENCE TO ***MIDGARD*** AND BRING ME THE WOMAN SHOWN IN THIS MYSTIC ORB.
WHY SUCH INTEREST IN A MERE MORTAL?
TRUE FRIENDS, SWEET ONE, MIND THEIR OWN AFFAIRS.
ORORO'S COMPANIONS, THE X-MEN, HAVE DONE ME GRIEVOUS HURT,* BUT I AM SWORN TO LEAVE THEM IN PEACE. I PRITHEE, REPAY THAT INSULT, A THOUSANDFOLD.
BE INSPIRED, ENCHANTRESS. I WISH THEIR AGONIES TO BE AS LONG-LASTING AS THEY ARE EXQUISITE.
THY WILL BE DONE, LOKI...
... WITH PLEASURE.
FOR THAT INCREDIBLE STORY SEE THE* ***X-MEN* *&* ***ALPHA FLIGHT*** *CROSSOVER SPECIAL, ON SALE NOW-- AnnN.*
X-MEN, THOU ART DOOMED.
ORORO, THY FLESH IS MINE-- AND SOON AFTER, THY ***SPIRIT!***
THEN, WITH THINE AID, I WILL ASSUME MY RIGHTFUL PLACE...
... AS ***RULER OF ASGARD!!***

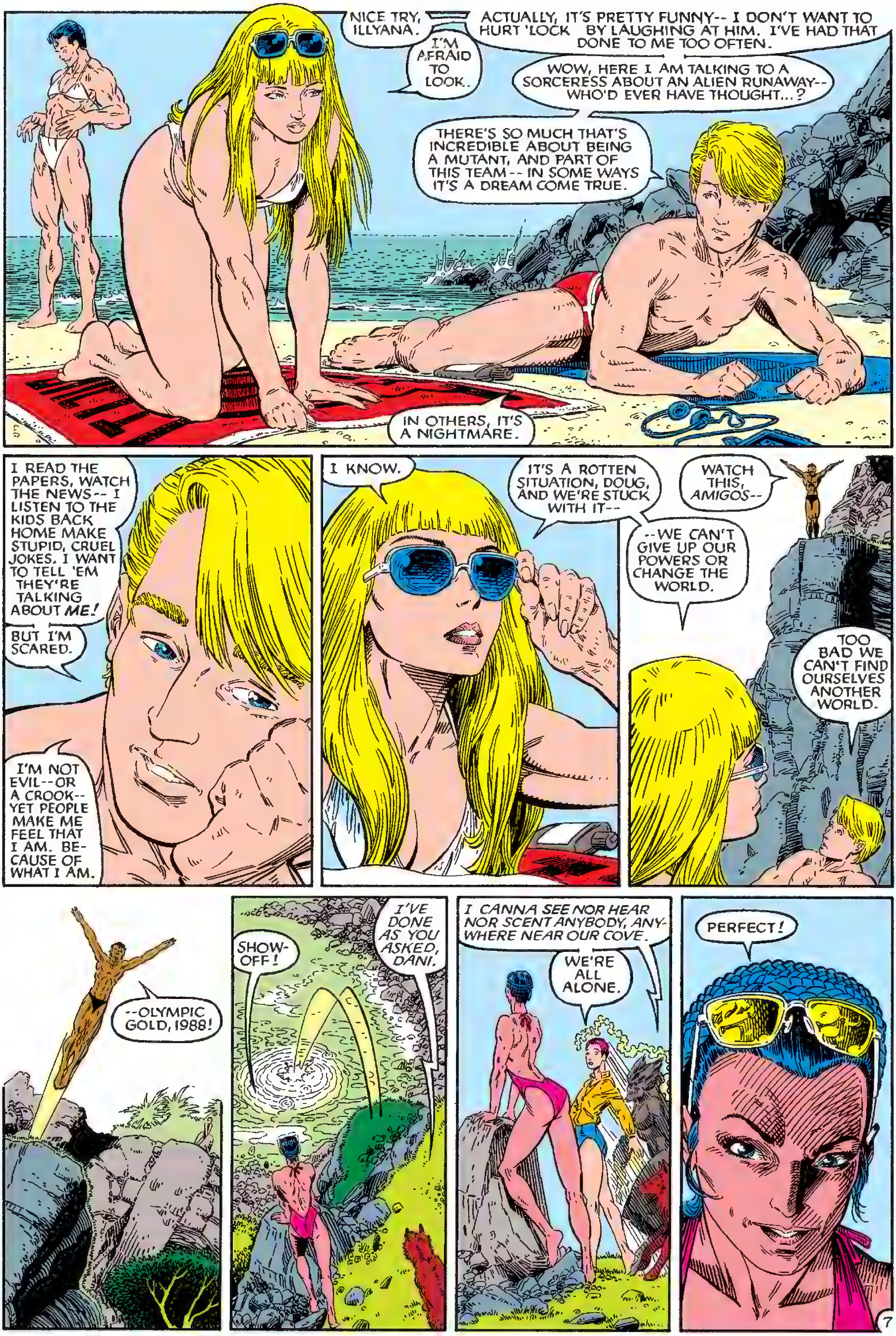

KIRĪNOS--
-- FEW PLACES ON EARTH CAN MATCH ITS ROUGH-HEWN, NATURAL BEAUTY.
OR ITS PEACE.
MORNIN', MISS ORORO!
AND TO YOU, Mr. STEELE, MISS HOLT-- IS THIS NOT THE LOVELIEST OF DAYS?
ARE THERE ANY OTHER KIND ON THIS ISLAND?
WE PASSED YOUR STUDENTS ON THEIR WAY TO THE NORTH COVE, LOOKED LIKE FOR A PICNIC. THEY'RE A DECENT CROWD, FOR CHILDREN-- BY THE WAY, HOW'S MISS MANH?
AS WELL...
... AS CAN BE EXPECTED. IF YOU WILL EXCUSE ME...
SHAN, I HAVE BROUGHT YOU BREAKFAST.
TAKE IT AWAY!
JE NE LE VEUX PAS, I DON'T WANT ANYTHING!!
KLIK
WHY?!
BETTER I STARVE THAN ENDURE THE REST OF MY LIFE...
YOU MUST EAT SOMETHING.

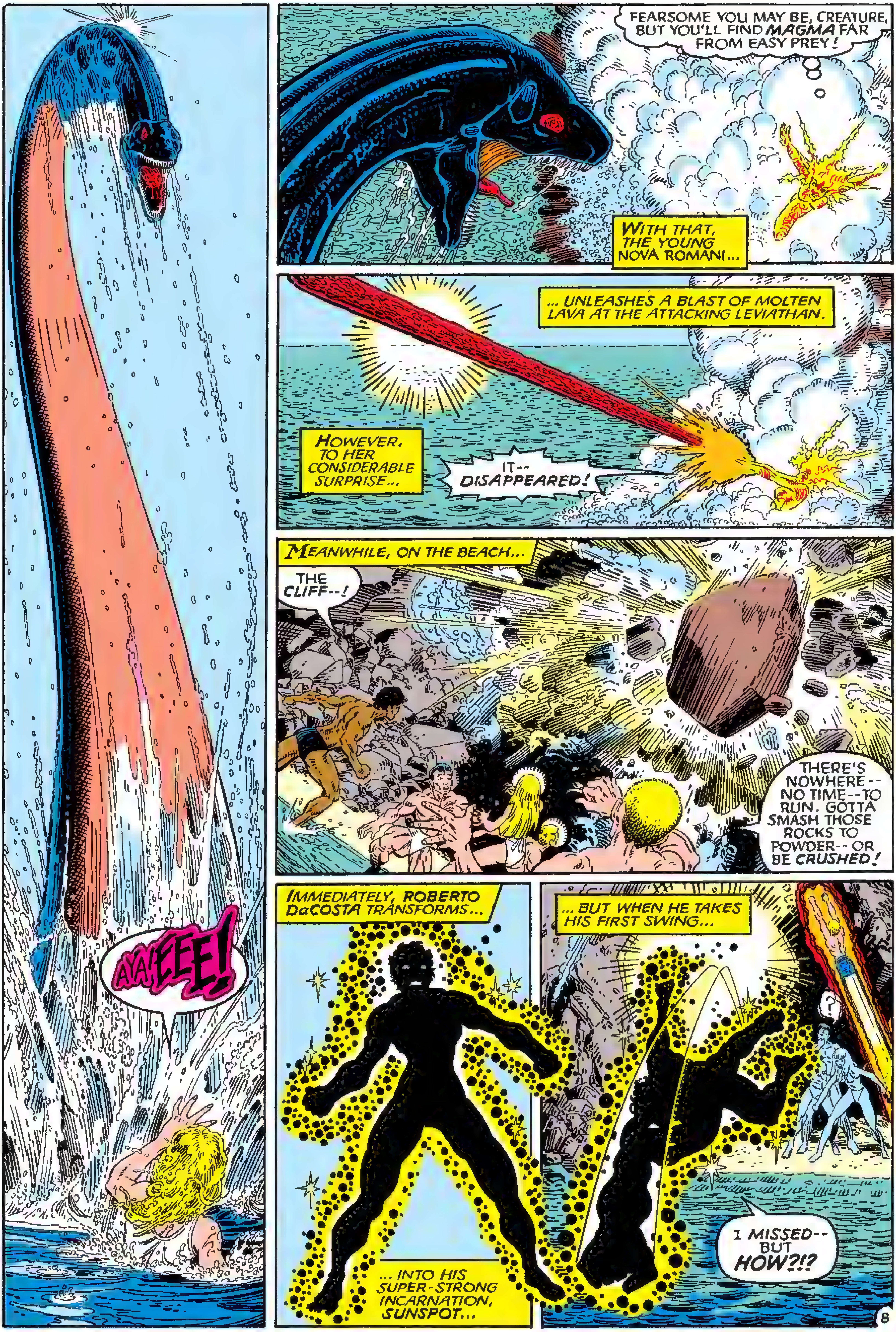

... LOOKING LIKE **THIS!!!**
SEE, ORORO-- ***SEE*** WHAT THAT DEVIL ***FAROUK*** HAS DONE TO ME! I AM A FREAK-- ***UN MONSTRE!***
HOW CAN I EVER AGAIN BE THE WOMAN I WAS?! HOW CAN I FACE MY BROTHER AND SISTER, ***LEONG*** AND ***NGA***-- I WILL TERRIFY AND DISGUST THEM, I DISGUST ***MYSELF!***
BETTER TO YIELD TO THE INEVITABLE AND END IT ALL, HERE AND NOW!
NO!


YOU CANNOT, SHAN, ***YOU MUST NOT!***
TO DO SO WOULD GIVE FAROUK HIS ULTIMATE VICTORY, IS THAT WHAT YOU WANT?! IS THAT WHY YOU FOUGHT FOR YOUR FREEDOM?!
BUT IT'S SO ***HARD!***

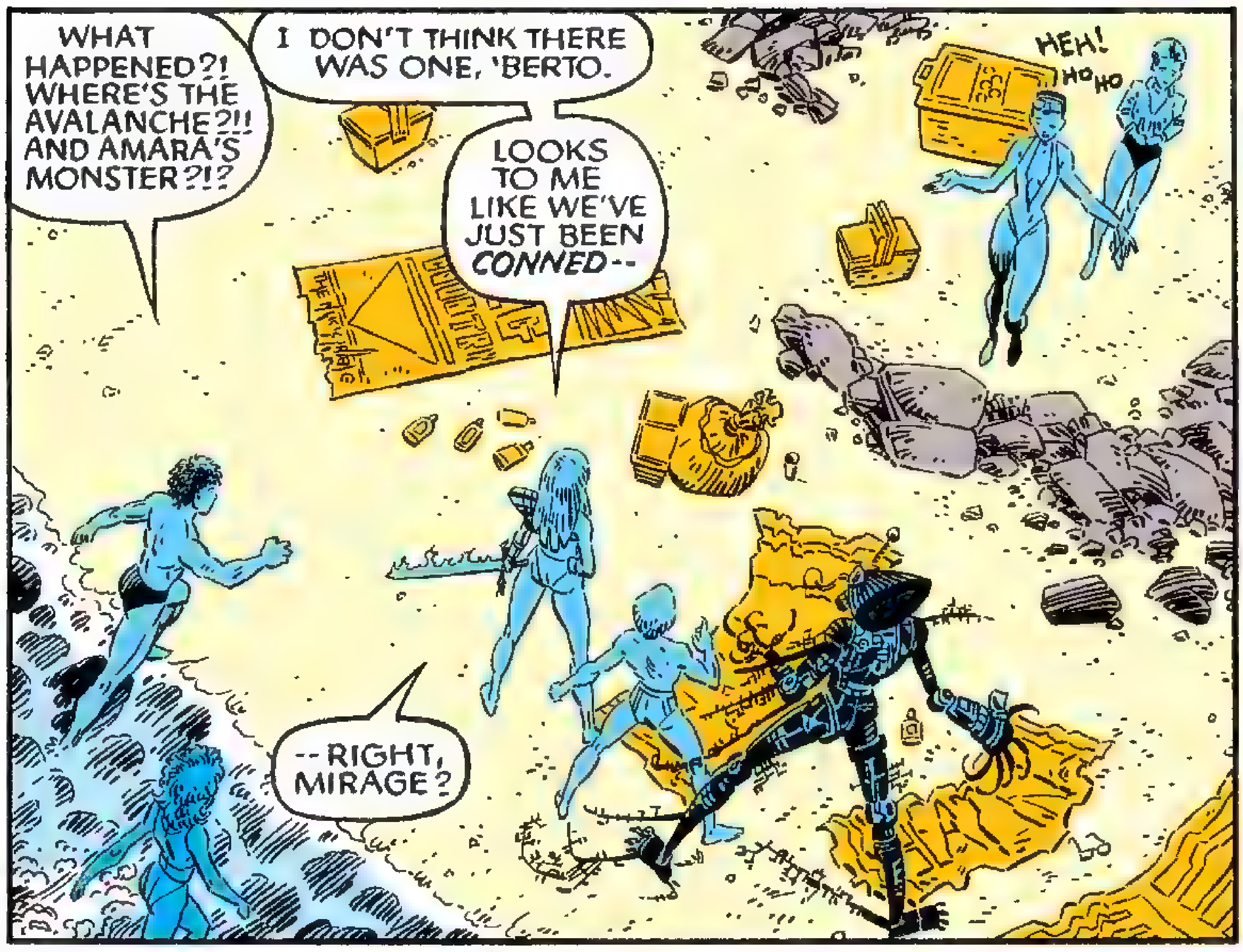

I KNOW. BELIEVE ME, I KNOW.
BUT YOU MUST HAVE ***HOPE,*** SHAN--
--COME WHAT MAY, YOU MUST ***TRY!***

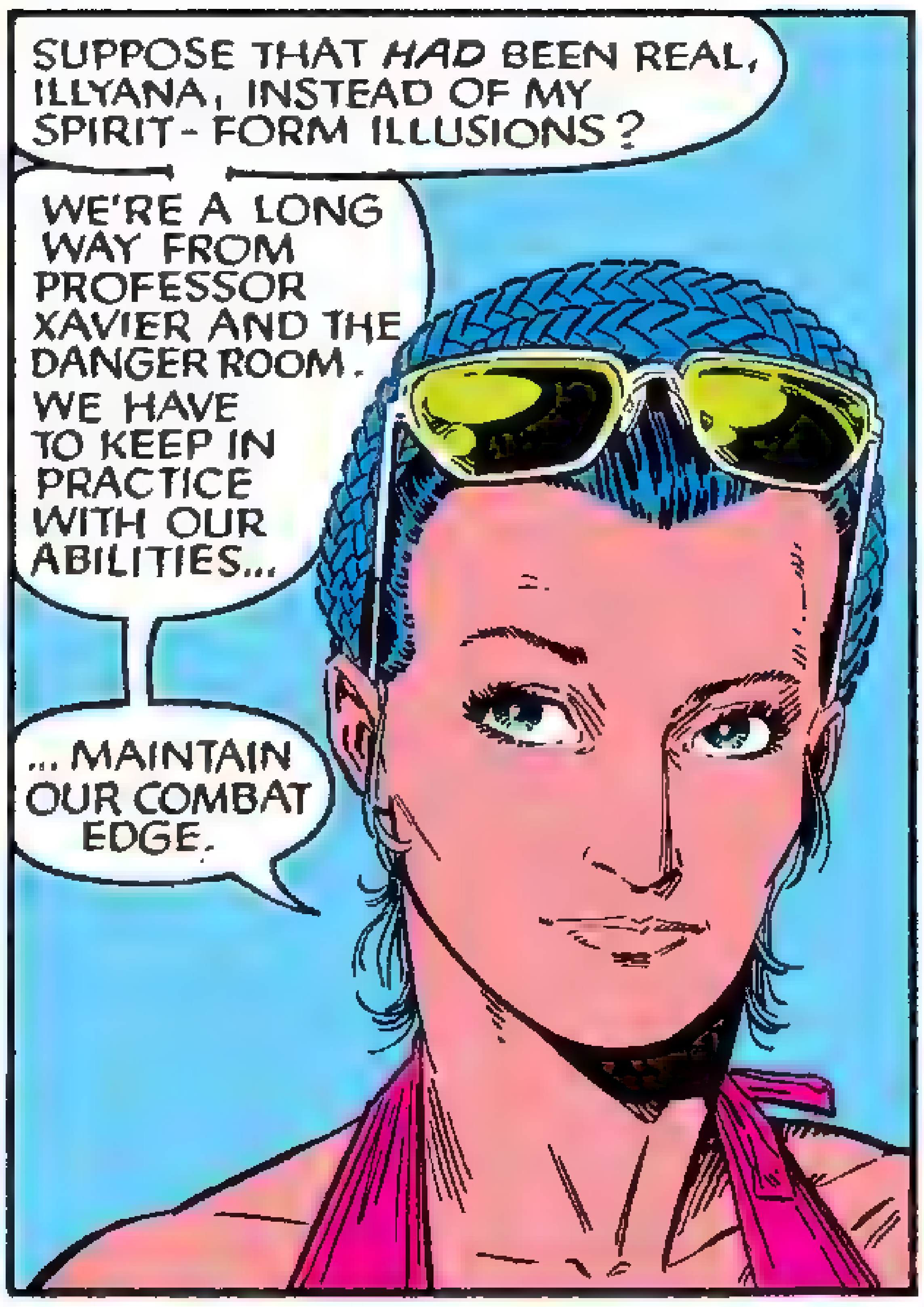

MEANWHILE, ACROSS THE ISLAND...
...XI'AN COY MANH'S FELLOW NEW MUTANTS ARE DOING WHAT TEEN-AGERS THE WORLD OVER LOVE TO DO BEST-- HAVING A GOOD TIME!
C'MON IN, Y'ALL!
THE WATER'S FINE!
AIN'T THIS SOMETHIN', AMARA?
?????
EVEN AFTER THE MANY MONTHS I HAVE LIVED AMONG YOUR PEOPLE, SAM, AS A STUDENT AT PROFESSOR XAVIER'S SCHOOL, I AM STILL NOT USED TO SUCH SIGHTS AS THIS VAST BODY OF WATER-- IT'S SO WONDERFULLY HUGE--
--AND, BEST OF ALL, THIS IS THE MEDITERRANEAN, THE SEA MY ANCESTORS RULED!
Oh, SAM, ORORO SAID WE MIGHT VISIT MOTHER ROME HERSELF! I CANNOT WAIT TO WRITE AND TELL MY HONORED FATHER!
DO ME A FAVOR, RAHNE?
AYE, DANI.
SHIFT TO WOLF-FORM, SO I CAN TELL YOU IN SECRET.
QUERY, FRIEND ILLYANA: DOES THIS SUBSTANCE POSSESS LIFE?
Uh, GEE, WARLOCK--NOT REALLY. WATER'S LIKE AIR-- IT'S A MEDIUM WHEREIN LIVING THINGS EXIST.
ITS MOTION NEVER CEASES...
...AND ITS ASPECT ALWAYS CHANGES--SELF HAS NEVER BEHELD SUCH FASCINATING DIVERSITY.
LIKE YOUR TASTE IN CLOTHES, huh?
'LOCK, THE SORT OF SWIMSUITS DANI AND AMY'RE WEARING REALLY AREN'T YOUR STYLE. YOU'VE GOT THE HANG OF MAKING YOUR BODY LOOK HUMAN...
...BUT WHAT YOU WEAR HAS TO CONFORM TO HUMAN SOCIETY AS WELL.
SELF IS GRATEFUL!
ANYTIME. WHAT'RE FRIENDS FOR?

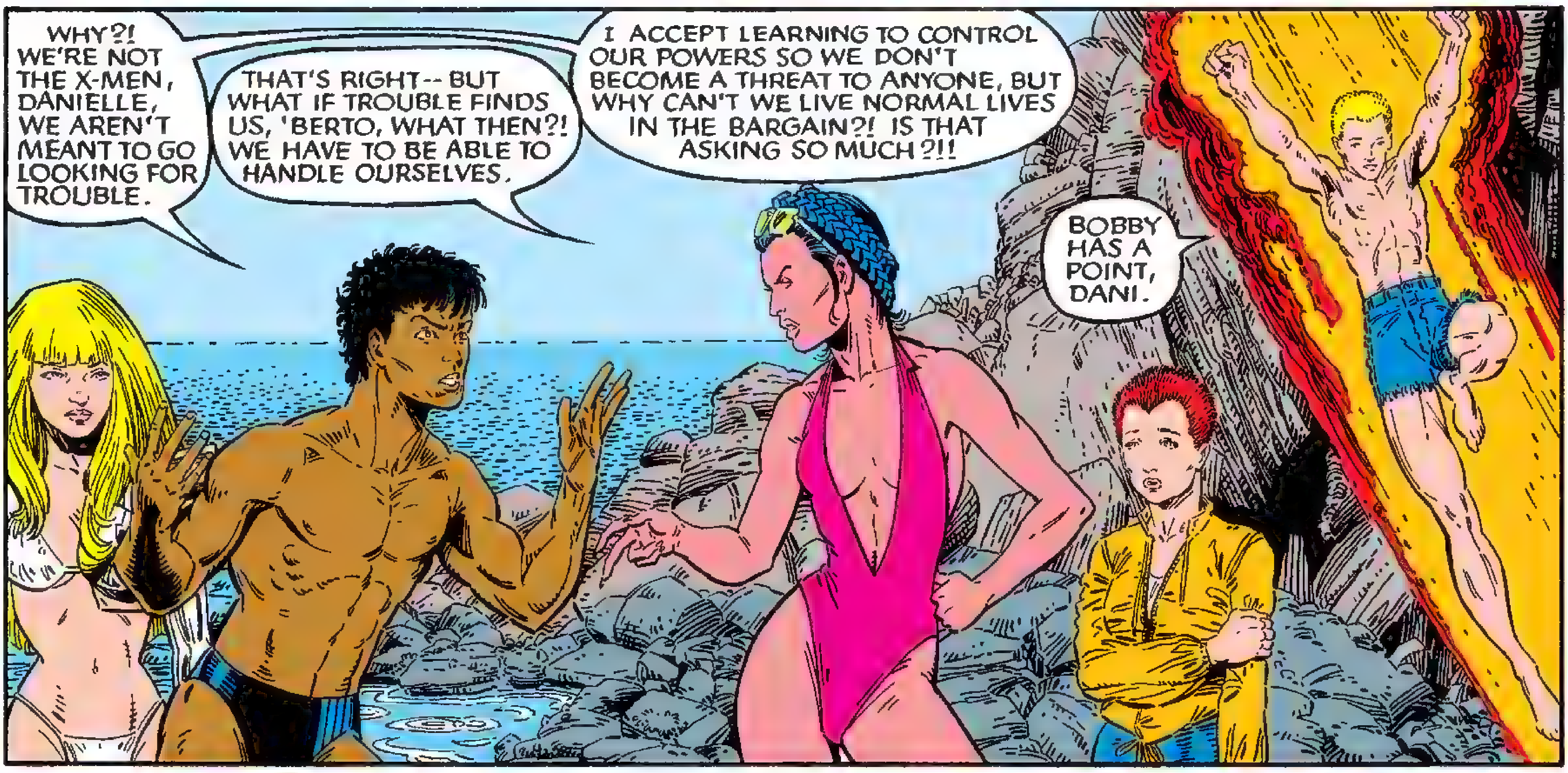

NICE TRY, ILLYANA.
I'M AFRAID TO LOOK.
ACTUALLY, IT'S PRETTY FUNNY-- I DON'T WANT TO HURT 'LOCK BY LAUGHING AT HIM. I'VE HAD THAT DONE TO ME TOO OFTEN.
WOW, HERE I AM TALKING TO A SORCERESS ABOUT AN ALIEN RUNAWAY-- WHO'D EVER HAVE THOUGHT...?
THERE'S SO MUCH THAT'S INCREDIBLE ABOUT BEING A MUTANT, AND PART OF THIS TEAM -- IN SOME WAYS IT'S A DREAM COME TRUE.
IN OTHERS, IT'S A NIGHTMARE.
I READ THE PAPERS, WATCH THE NEWS -- I LISTEN TO THE KIDS BACK HOME MAKE STUPID, CRUEL JOKES. I WANT TO TELL 'EM THEY'RE TALKING ABOUT *ME!*
BUT I'M SCARED.
I'M NOT EVIL--OR A CROOK-- YET PEOPLE MAKE ME FEEL THAT I AM. BECAUSE OF WHAT I AM.
I KNOW.
IT'S A ROTTEN SITUATION, DOUG, AND WE'RE STUCK WITH IT--
--WE CAN'T GIVE UP OUR POWERS OR CHANGE THE WORLD.
WATCH THIS, *AMIGOS*--
TOO BAD WE CAN'T FIND OURSELVES ANOTHER WORLD.
--OLYMPIC GOLD, 1988!
SHOW-OFF!
I'VE DONE AS YOU ASKED, DANI.
I CANNA SEE NOR HEAR NOR SCENT ANYBODY, ANYWHERE NEAR OUR COVE.
WE'RE ALL ALONE.
PERFECT!

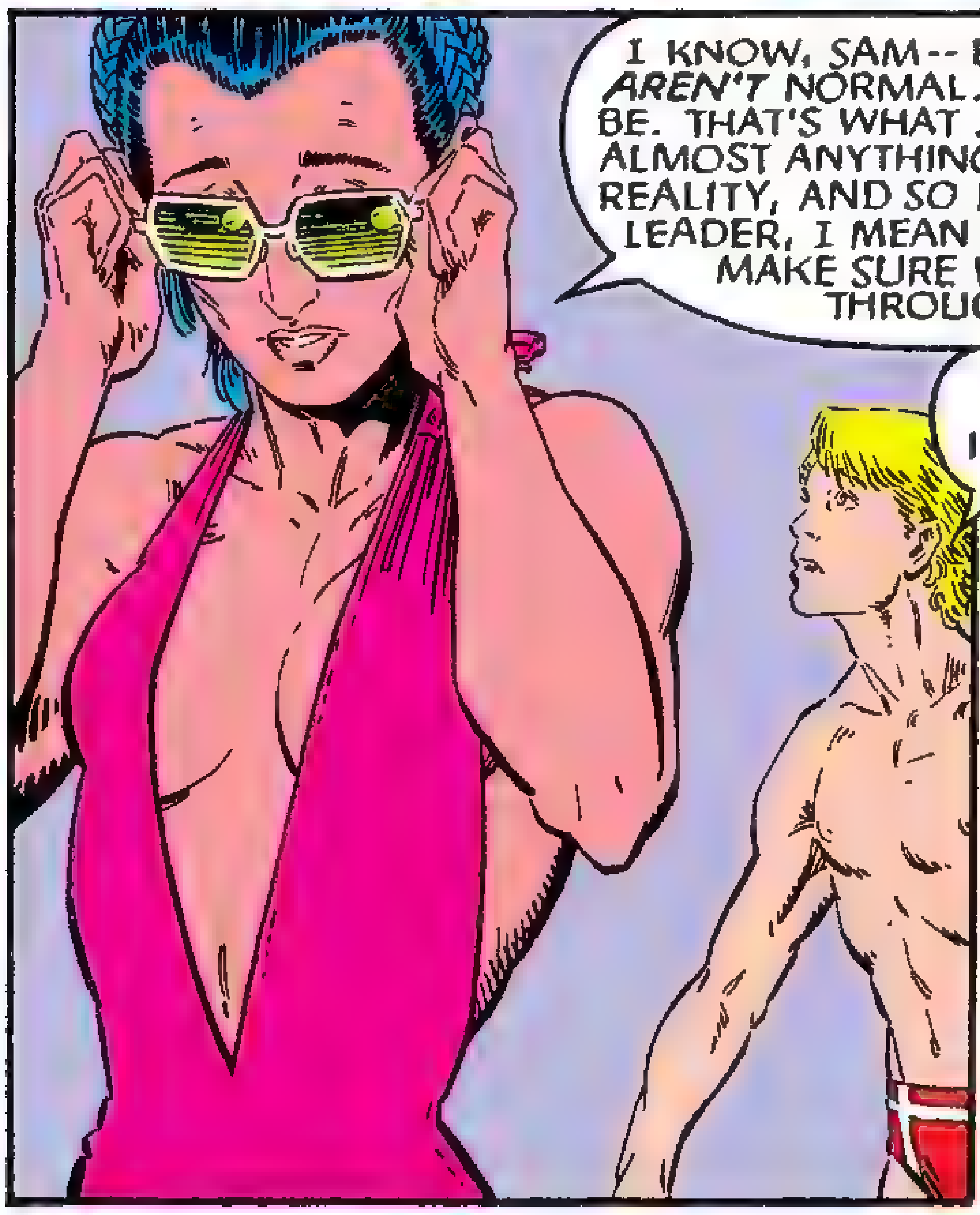

AAAHEEE!
FEARSOME YOU MAY BE, CREATURE, BUT YOU'LL FIND *MAGMA* FAR FROM EASY PREY!
WITH THAT, THE YOUNG NOVA ROMANI...
... UNLEASHES A BLAST OF MOLTEN LAVA AT THE ATTACKING LEVIATHAN.
HOWEVER, TO HER CONSIDERABLE SURPRISE...
IT-- DISAPPEARED!
MEANWHILE, ON THE BEACH...
THE *CLIFF*--!
THERE'S NOWHERE-- NO TIME--TO RUN. GOTTA SMASH THOSE ROCKS TO POWDER--OR BE *CRUSHED*!
IMMEDIATELY, ROBERTO DaCOSTA TRANSFORMS...
... INTO HIS SUPER-STRONG INCARNATION, SUNSPOT...
... BUT WHEN HE TAKES HIS FIRST SWING...
?
I *MISSED*-- BUT *HOW?!?*

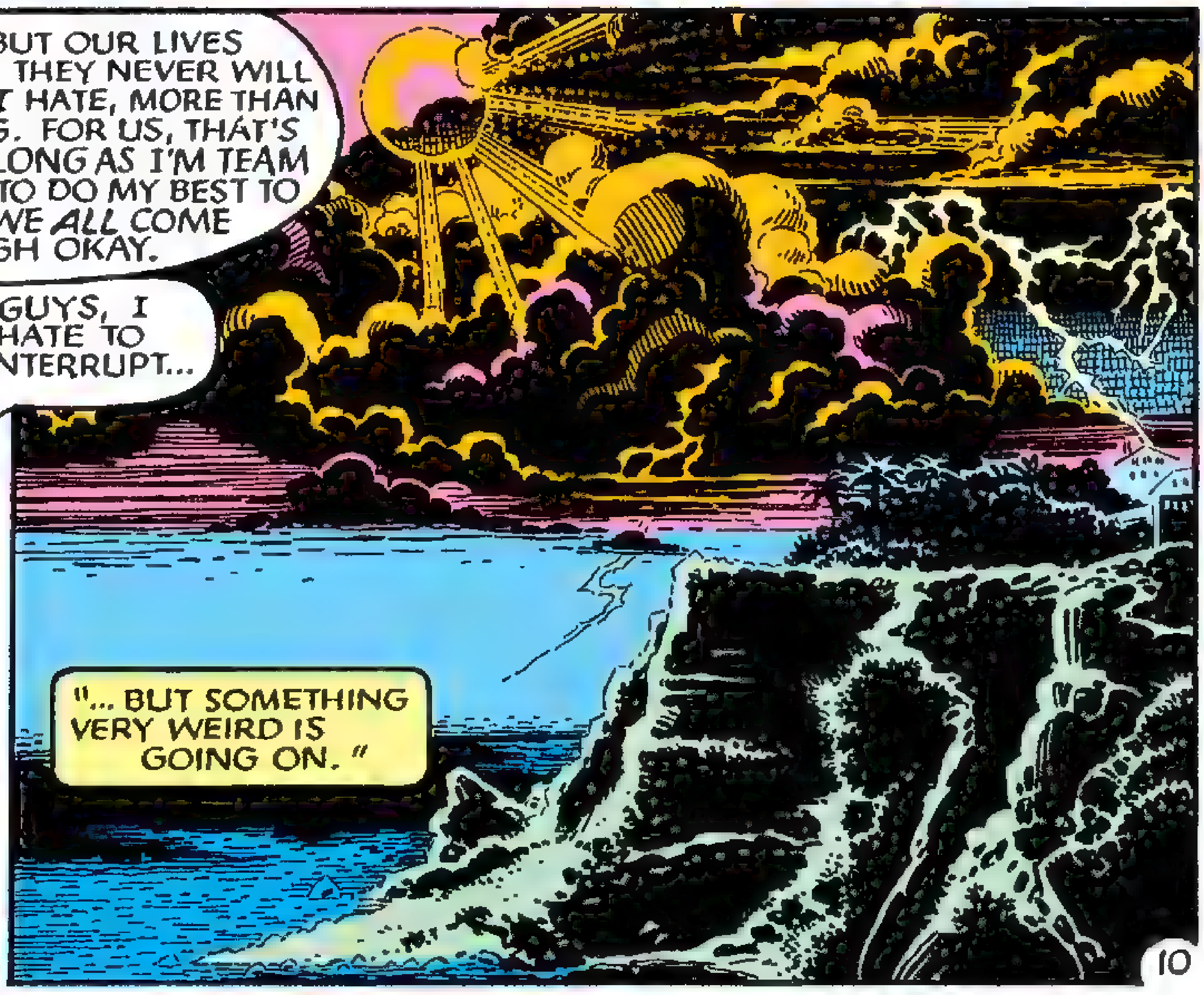
AH'M *CANNON-BALLIN'* THROUGH THE HEART OF THE AVALANCHE...
... BUT AH AIN'T HITTIN' A BLESSED THING!
SOMETHIN' AWFUL SCREWY--
HOLY COW!?!
THE CLIFF-- AH'M HEADIN' STRAIGHT FOR IT!
IF AH HIT, AH'LL *REALLY* MAKE A MESS-- AH GOTTA *TURN*, GONNA BE CLOSE, AH *GOTTA*--
--*DID IT!*
MY SOULSWORD'S APPEARED-- NOT THAT IT'LL DO MUCH GOOD, SINCE ITS POWER IS TO DISRUPT SPELLS, NOT SHATTER STONES.
WARLOCK, DOUG'S TALENT WON'T PROTECT HIM--
--YOU KEEP HIM SAFE!
SELF IS READY!
SELF WILL DEFEND YOU ALL!
BUT, ILLYANA--SELF'S SENSORS INDICATE A NON-HOSTILE *SITUATION*. SELF PERCEIVES NO THREAT!
I *HATE* THIS! I'M A NEW MUTANT, I'M PART OF THE TEAM, BUT THE OTHERS TREAT ME LIKE A *BABY* BECAUSE ALL I CAN DO IS SPEAK AND UNDERSTAND LANGUAGES.
I'LL *NEVER* BE ANY GOOD TO THEM IN A FIGHT!
HA HA HA HA HA HA HA HA
?!?
!?!
?


WHAT HAPPENED?! WHERE'S THE AVALANCHE?!! AND AMARA'S MONSTER?!?
I DON'T THINK THERE WAS ONE, 'BERTO.
HEH! HO HO
LOOKS TO ME LIKE WE'VE JUST BEEN *CONNED*--
--RIGHT, MIRAGE?

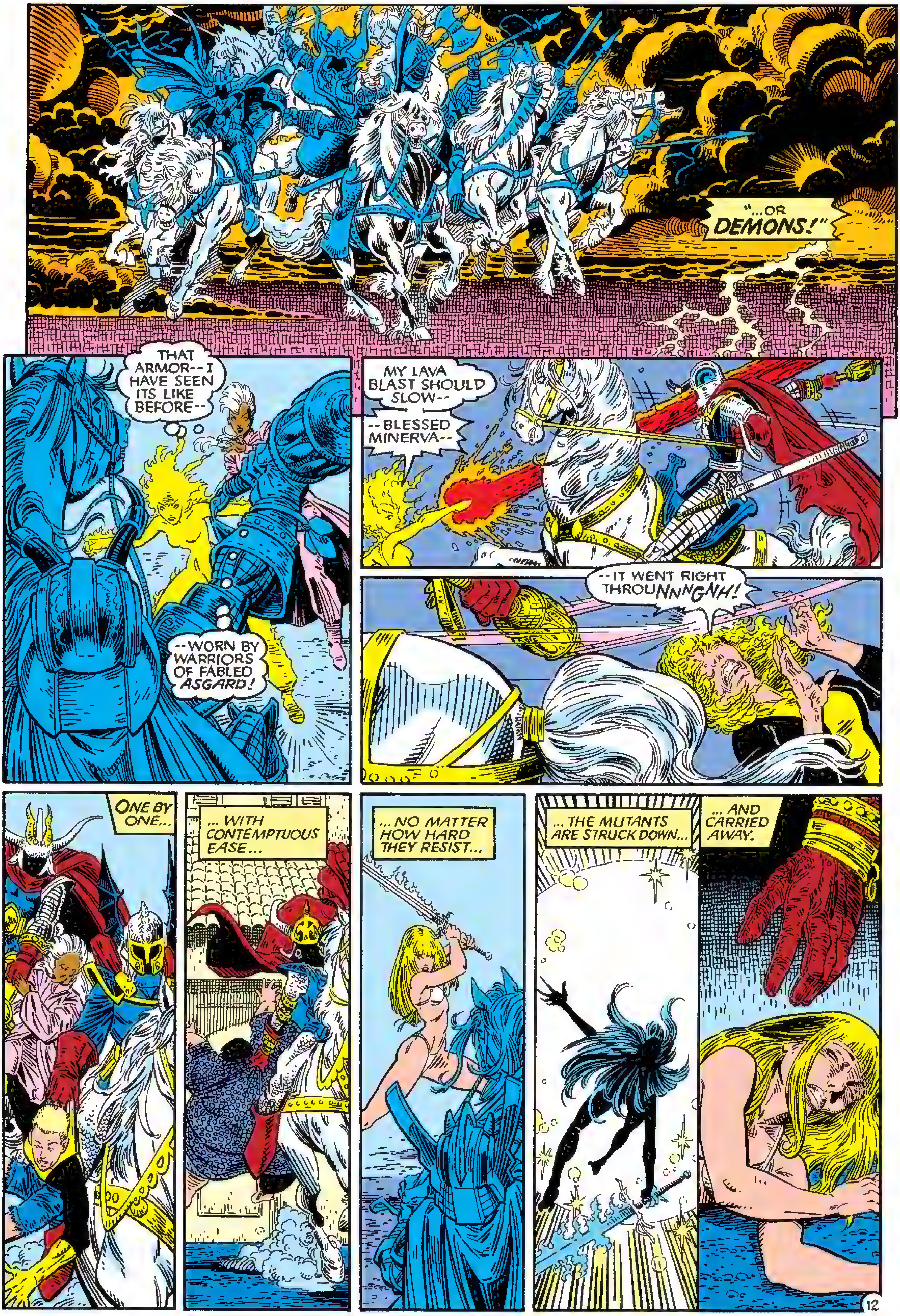

SUPPOSE THAT *HAD* BEEN REAL, ILLYANA, INSTEAD OF MY SPIRIT-FORM ILLUSIONS?
WE'RE A LONG WAY FROM PROFESSOR XAVIER AND THE DANGER ROOM. WE HAVE TO KEEP IN PRACTICE WITH OUR ABILITIES...
...MAINTAIN OUR COMBAT EDGE.

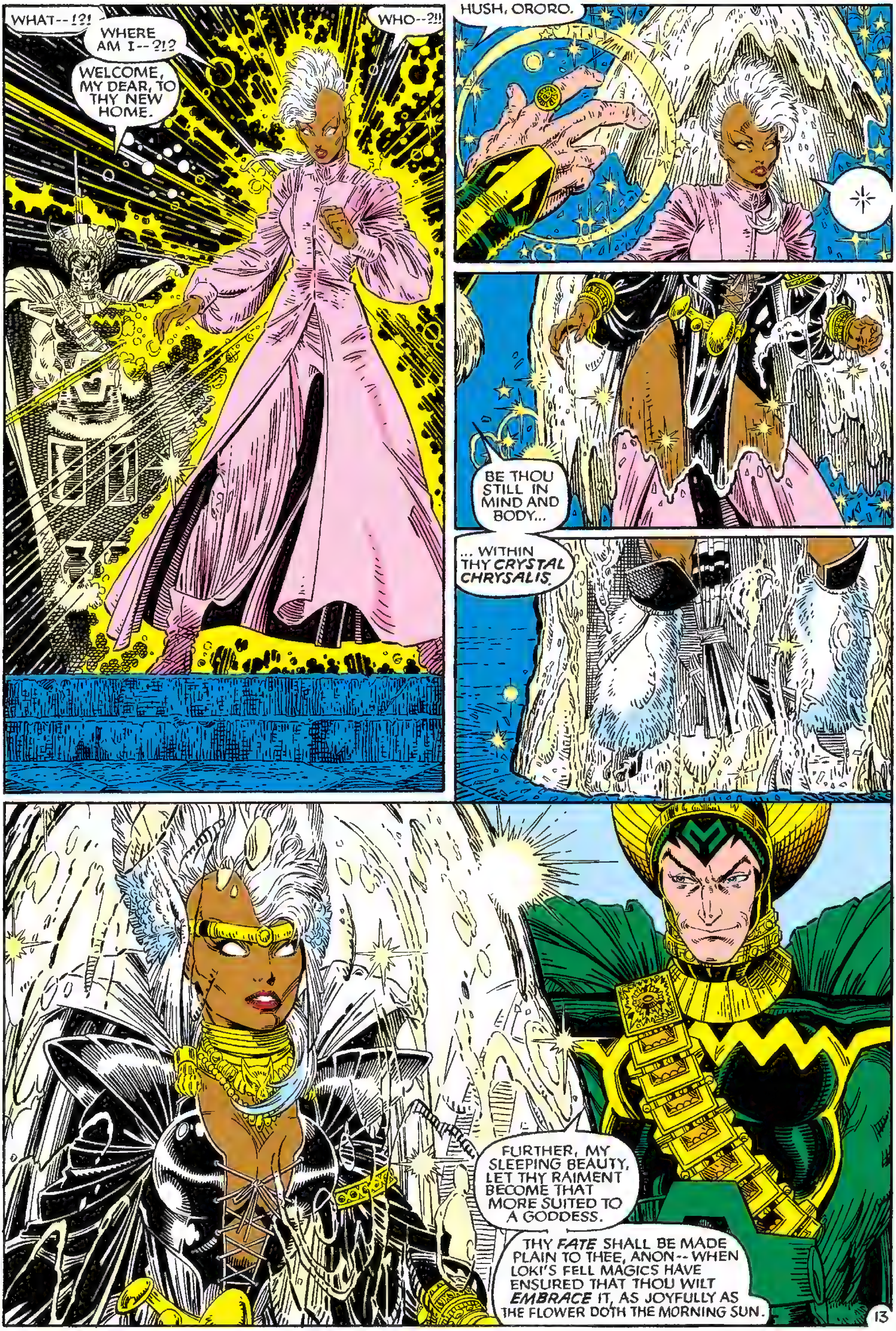

WHY?! WE'RE NOT THE X-MEN, DANIELLE, WE AREN'T MEANT TO GO LOOKING FOR TROUBLE.
THAT'S RIGHT-- BUT WHAT IF TROUBLE FINDS US, 'BERTO, WHAT THEN?! WE HAVE TO BE ABLE TO HANDLE OURSELVES.
I ACCEPT LEARNING TO CONTROL OUR POWERS SO WE DON'T BECOME A THREAT TO ANYONE, BUT WHY CAN'T WE LIVE NORMAL LIVES IN THE BARGAIN?! IS THAT ASKING SO MUCH?!!
BOBBY HAS A POINT, DANI.

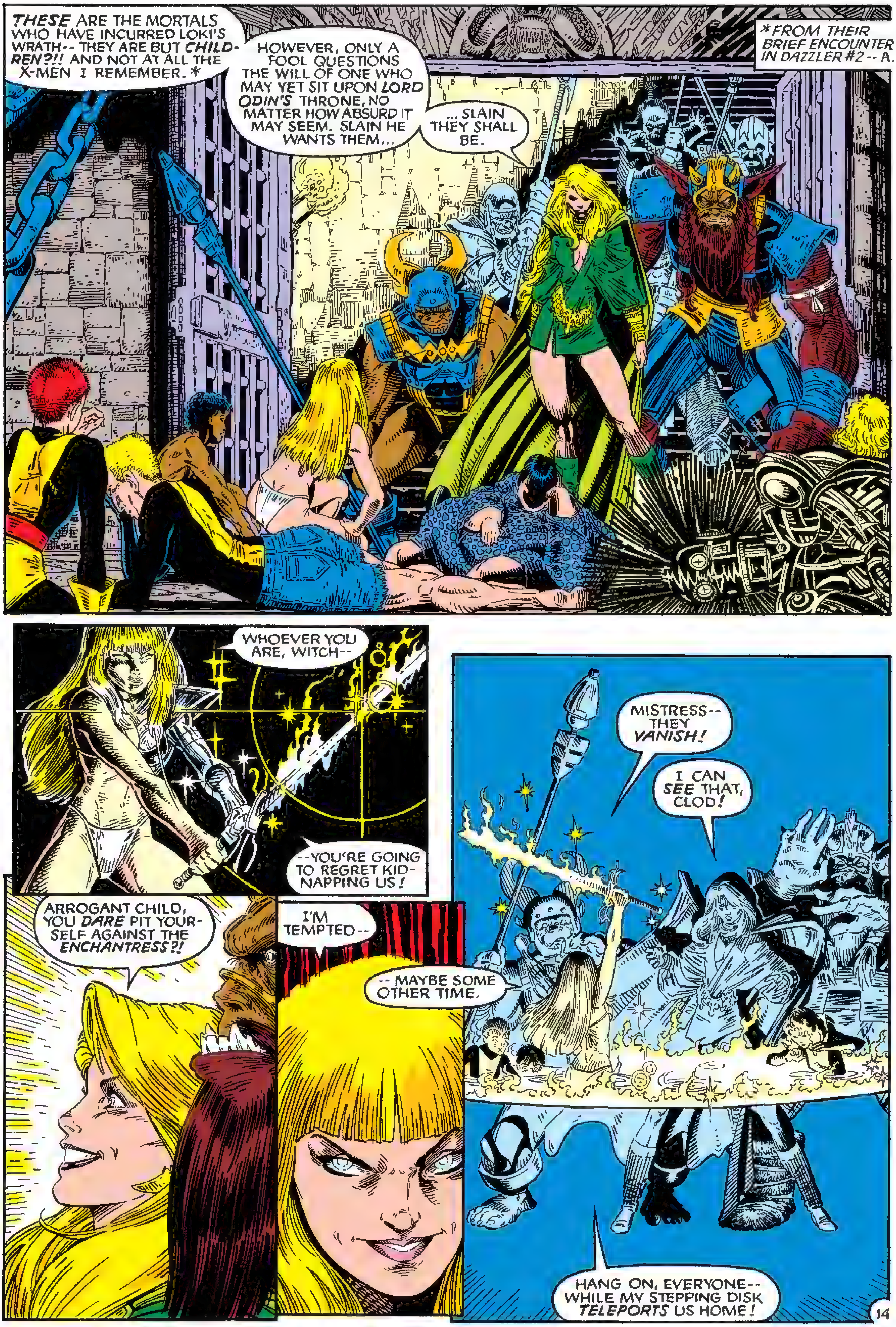

I KNOW, SAM-- BUT OUR LIVES *AREN'T* NORMAL. THEY NEVER WILL BE. THAT'S WHAT *I* HATE, MORE THAN ALMOST ANYTHING. FOR US, THAT'S REALITY, AND SO LONG AS I'M TEAM LEADER, I MEAN TO DO MY BEST TO MAKE SURE WE *ALL* COME THROUGH OKAY.
GUYS, I HATE TO INTERRUPT...

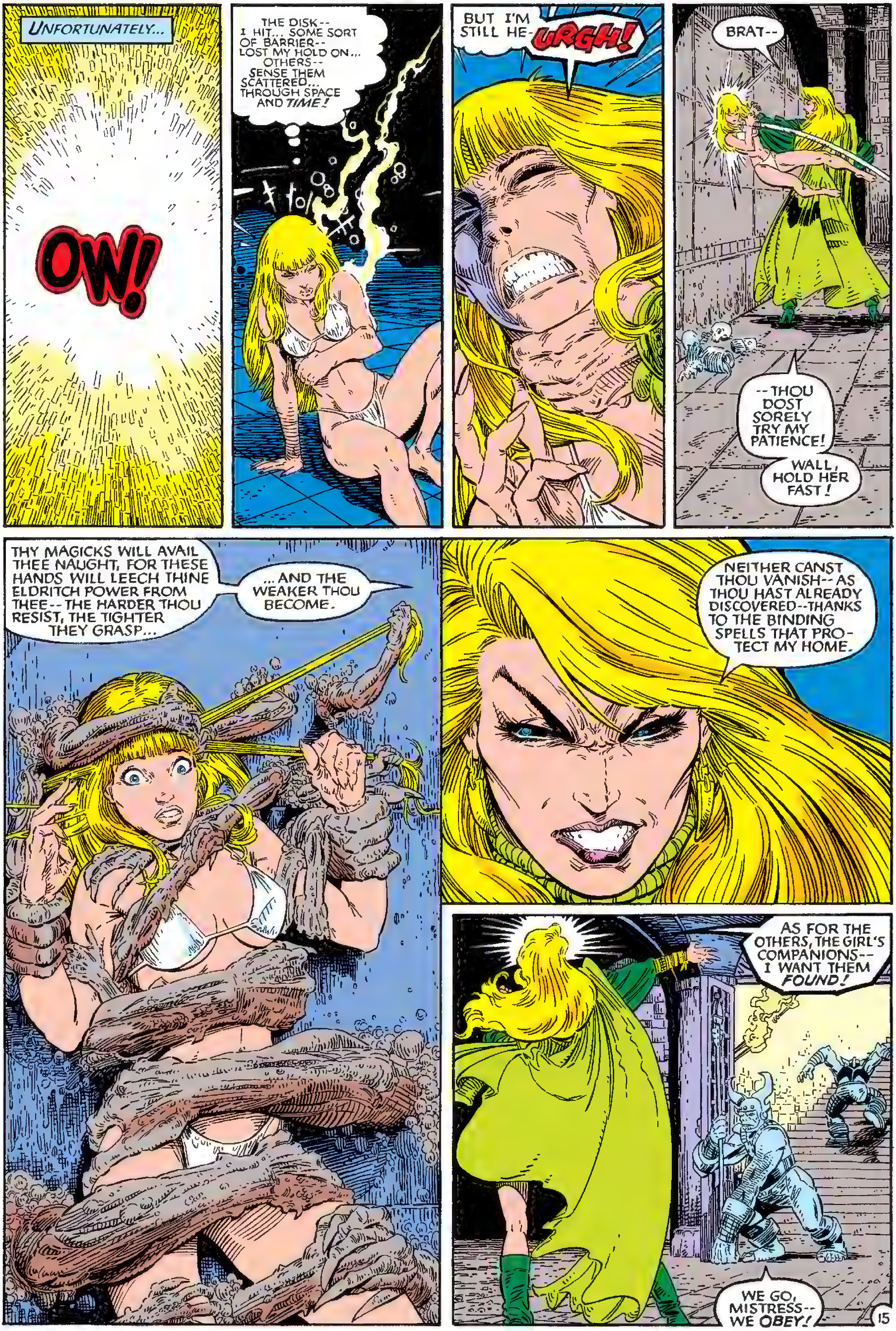

"...BUT SOMETHING VERY WEIRD IS GOING ON."

QUICK AS THEY CAN, THE MUTANTS RACE BACK TO THE VILLAGE.
IT'S DARK AS MIDNIGHT!
THE ISLANDERS LOOK PRETTY FREAKED, DANI-- WHATEVER THIS IS, IT AIN'T NATURAL!
WARLOCK, SCOUT THE STORM--
--SEE WHAT'S COMING!
SELF GOES!
TAKE CARE, 'LOCK!
CONTRADICTORY DATA INPUT-- SCANNERS REGISTER MULTIPLE ANOMALIEEEEE
'LOCK!
HE WAS HIT BY LIGHTNING-- LOOKS LIKE HE SHORTED EVERY CIRCUIT IN HIS TECHNO-ORGANIC BOD!
GLAD ME-- AN' EVERYTHIN' AH CARRY-- ARE *INVULNERABLE* WHEN AH BLAST. AT LEAST, HE CAN'T BE HURT ANY WORSE THAN HE ALREADY IS.
BETTER GET HIM DOWN, FAST! HE AIN'T HARDLY GLOWIN' AT ALL.
THAT MEANS HE'S IN A PRETTY BAD WAY!
MY *SOUL-SWORD*-- IT ONLY RESPONDS LIKE THIS...
... IN THE PRESENCE OF *SORCERY*...

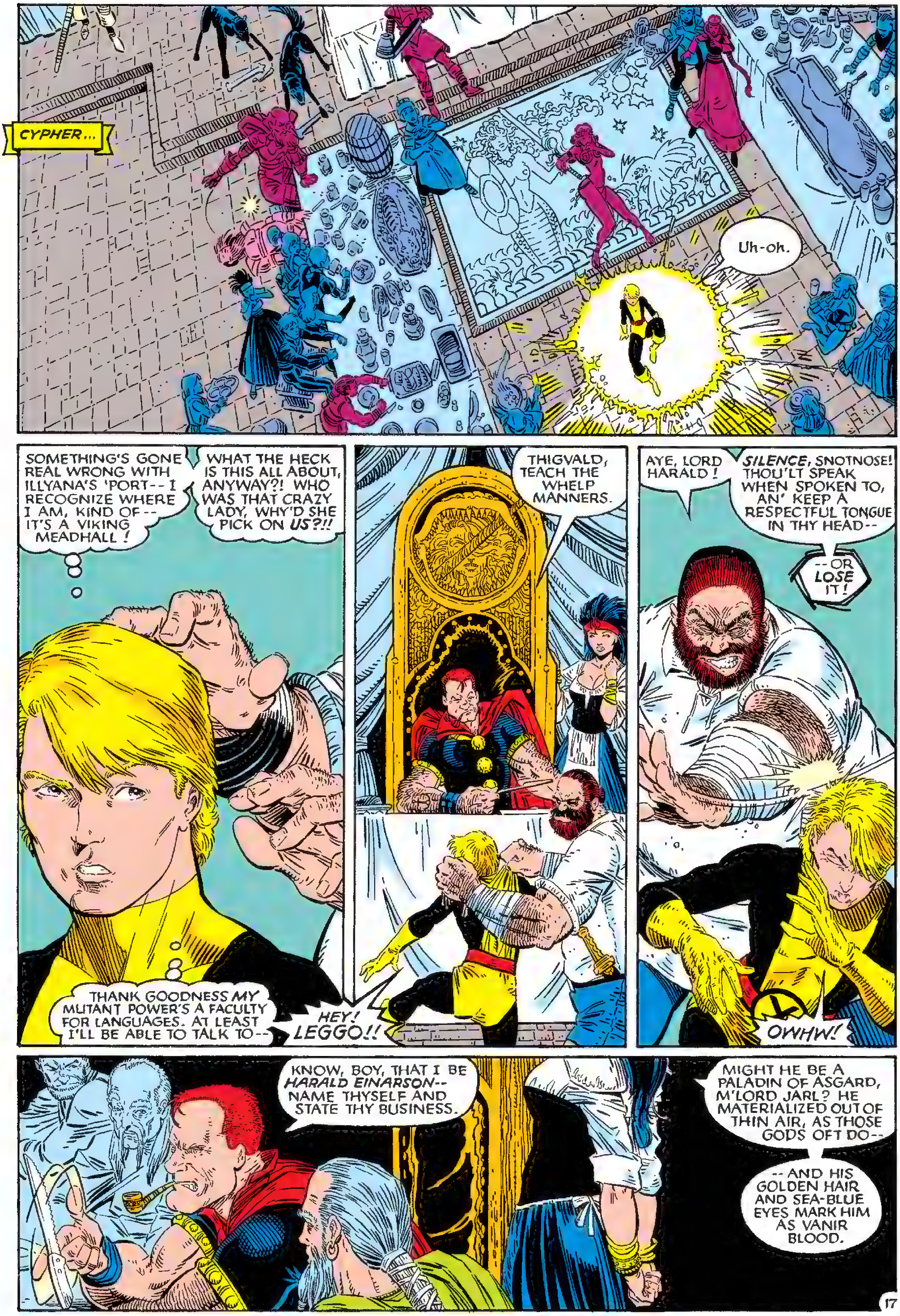

"...OR DEMONS!"
THAT ARMOR-- I HAVE SEEN ITS LIKE BEFORE--
--WORN BY WARRIORS OF FABLED ASGARD!
MY LAVA BLAST SHOULD SLOW--
--BLESSED MINERVA--
--IT WENT RIGHT THROUNNNGNH!
ONE BY ONE...
...WITH CONTEMPTUOUS EASE...
...NO MATTER HOW HARD THEY RESIST...
...THE MUTANTS ARE STRUCK DOWN...
...AND CARRIED AWAY.

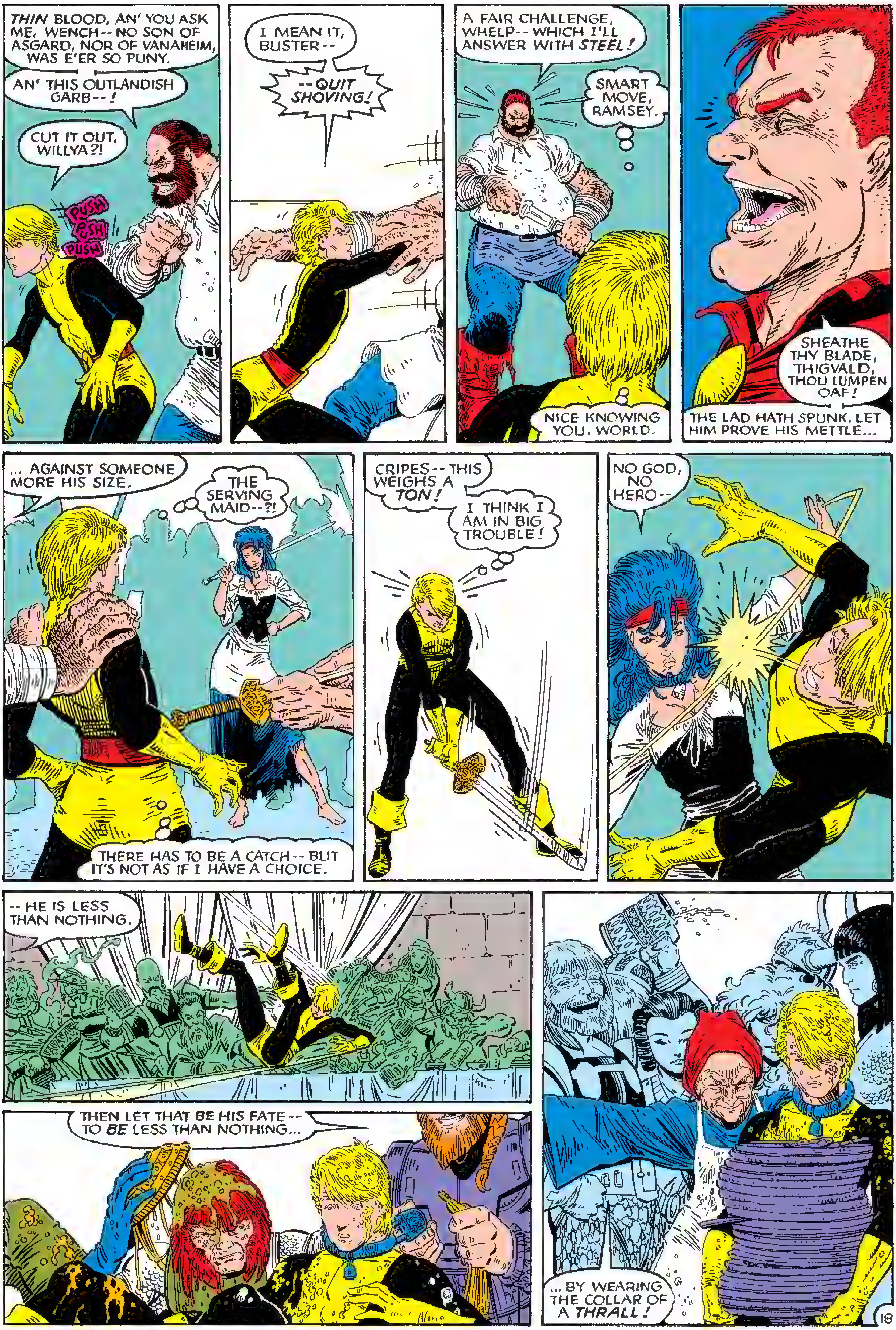

WHAT--!?!
WHERE AM I--?!?
WHO--?!!
WELCOME, MY DEAR, TO THY NEW HOME.
HUSH, ORORO.
BE THOU STILL IN MIND AND BODY...
... WITHIN THY *CRYSTAL CHRYSALIS*.
FURTHER, MY SLEEPING BEAUTY, LET THY RAIMENT BECOME THAT MORE SUITED TO A GODDESS.
THY *FATE* SHALL BE MADE PLAIN TO THEE, ANON-- WHEN LOKI'S FELL MAGICS HAVE ENSURED THAT THOU WILT *EMBRACE* IT, AS JOYFULLY AS THE FLOWER DOTH THE MORNING SUN.

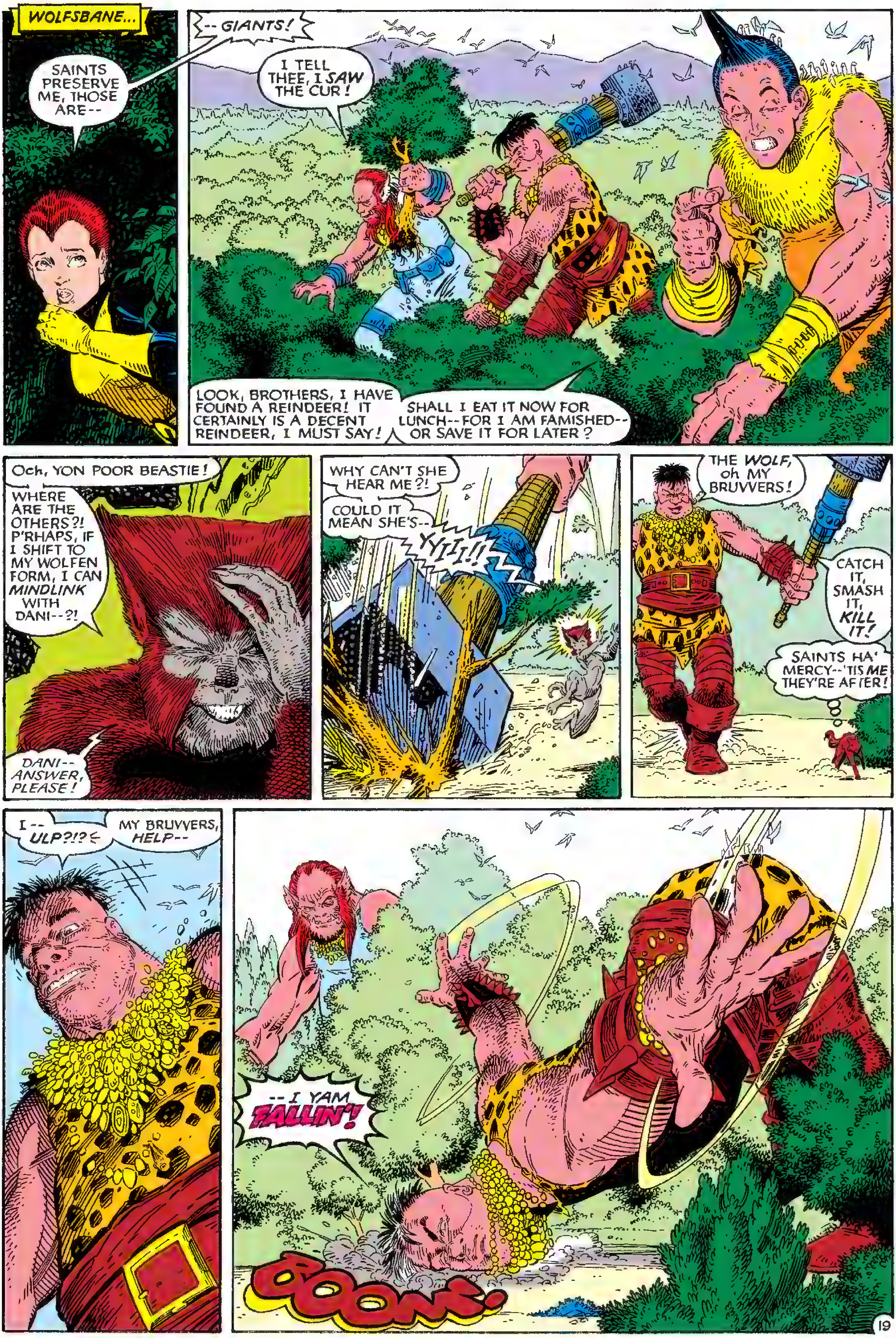

THESE ARE THE MORTALS WHO HAVE INCURRED LOKI'S WRATH-- THEY ARE BUT CHILDREN?!! AND NOT AT ALL THE X-MEN I REMEMBER.*
*FROM THEIR BRIEF ENCOUNTER IN DAZZLER #2 -- A.
HOWEVER, ONLY A FOOL QUESTIONS THE WILL OF ONE WHO MAY YET SIT UPON LORD ODIN'S THRONE, NO MATTER HOW ABSURD IT MAY SEEM. SLAIN HE WANTS THEM...
... SLAIN THEY SHALL BE.
WHOEVER YOU ARE, WITCH--
--YOU'RE GOING TO REGRET KIDNAPPING US!
ARROGANT CHILD, YOU DARE PIT YOURSELF AGAINST THE ENCHANTRESS?!
I'M TEMPTED--
-- MAYBE SOME OTHER TIME.
MISTRESS-- THEY VANISH!
I CAN SEE THAT, CLOD!
HANG ON, EVERYONE-- WHILE MY STEPPING DISK TELEPORTS US HOME!

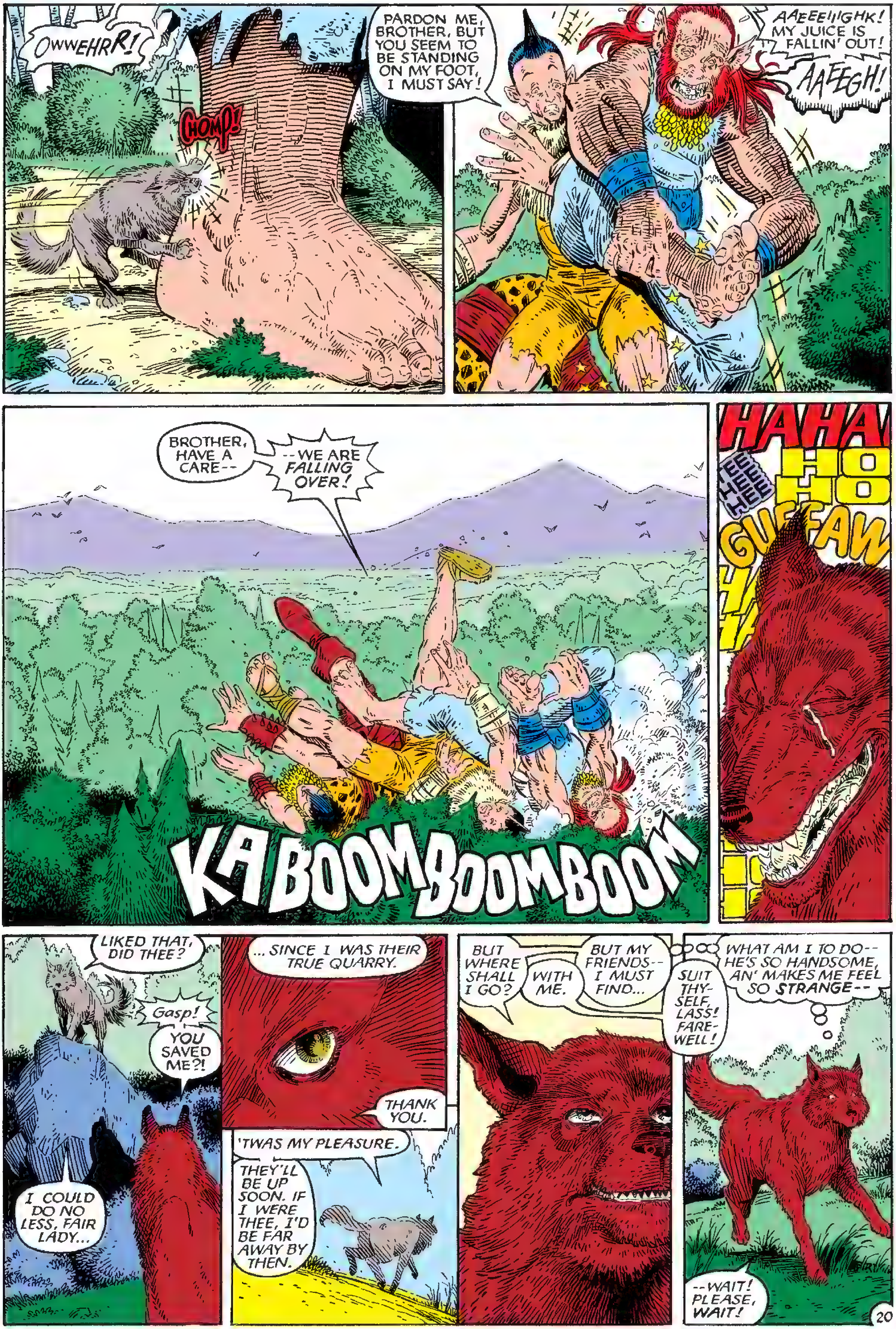

UNFORTUNATELY...
OW!
THE DISK-- I HIT... SOME SORT OF BARRIER-- LOST MY HOLD ON... OTHERS-- SENSE THEM SCATTERED... THROUGH SPACE AND TIME!
BUT I'M STILL HE-
URGH!
BRAT--
--THOU DOST SORELY TRY MY PATIENCE!
WALL, HOLD HER FAST!
THY MAGICKS WILL AVAIL THEE NAUGHT, FOR THESE HANDS WILL LEECH THINE ELDRITCH POWER FROM THEE-- THE HARDER THOU RESIST, THE TIGHTER THEY GRASP...
...AND THE WEAKER THOU BECOME.
NEITHER CANST THOU VANISH-- AS THOU HAST ALREADY DISCOVERED--THANKS TO THE BINDING SPELLS THAT PROTECT MY HOME.
AS FOR THE OTHERS, THE GIRL'S COMPANIONS-- I WANT THEM FOUND!
WE GO, MISTRESS-- WE OBEY!

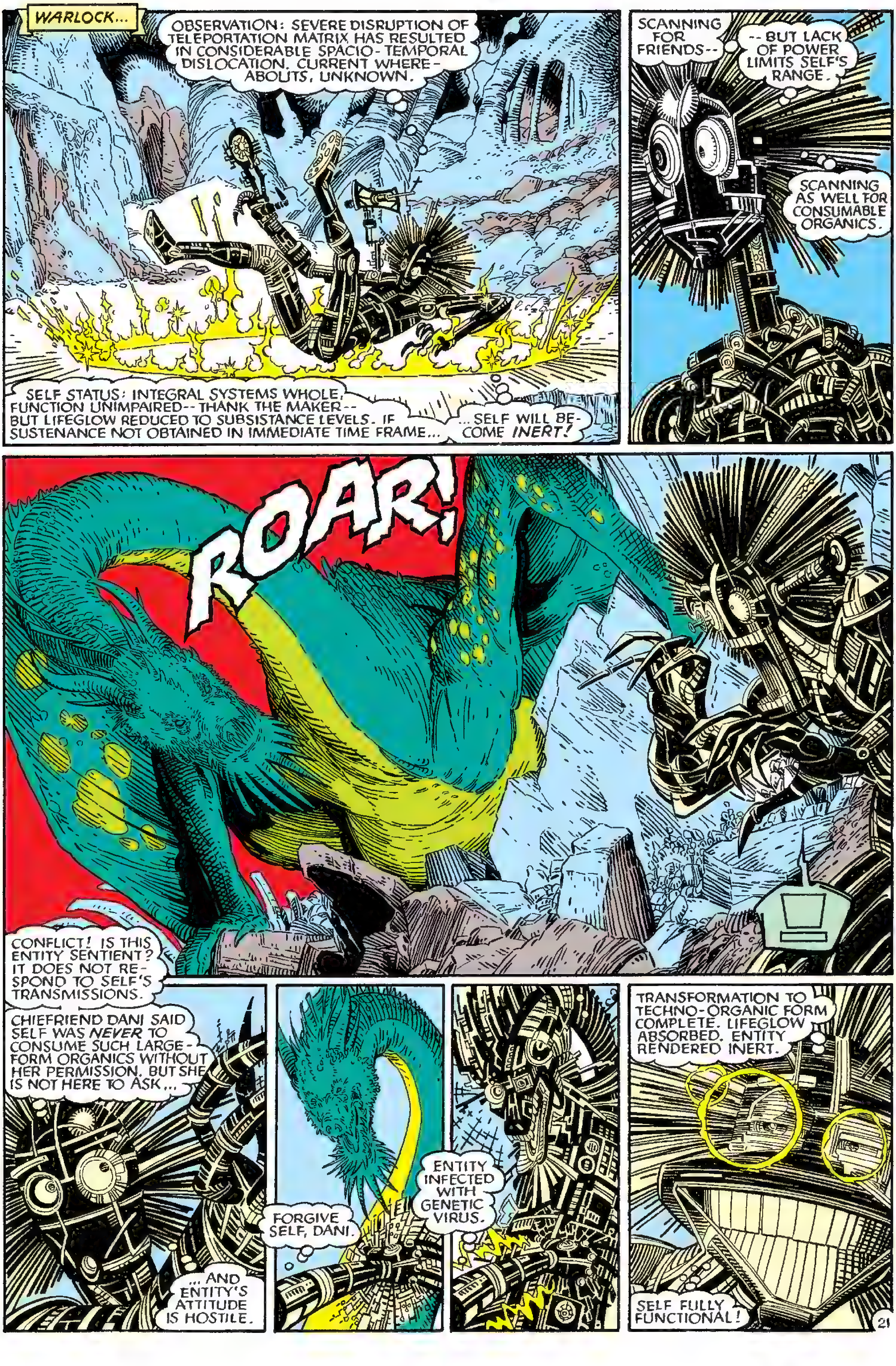
KARMA...
I AM LOST.
NO FOOD. NO WATER. NO SHELTER. NO FRIENDS.
NO HOPE.
I CANNOT GO ON.
I WILL LIE DOWN, AND CLOSE MY EYES...
...AND DIE.

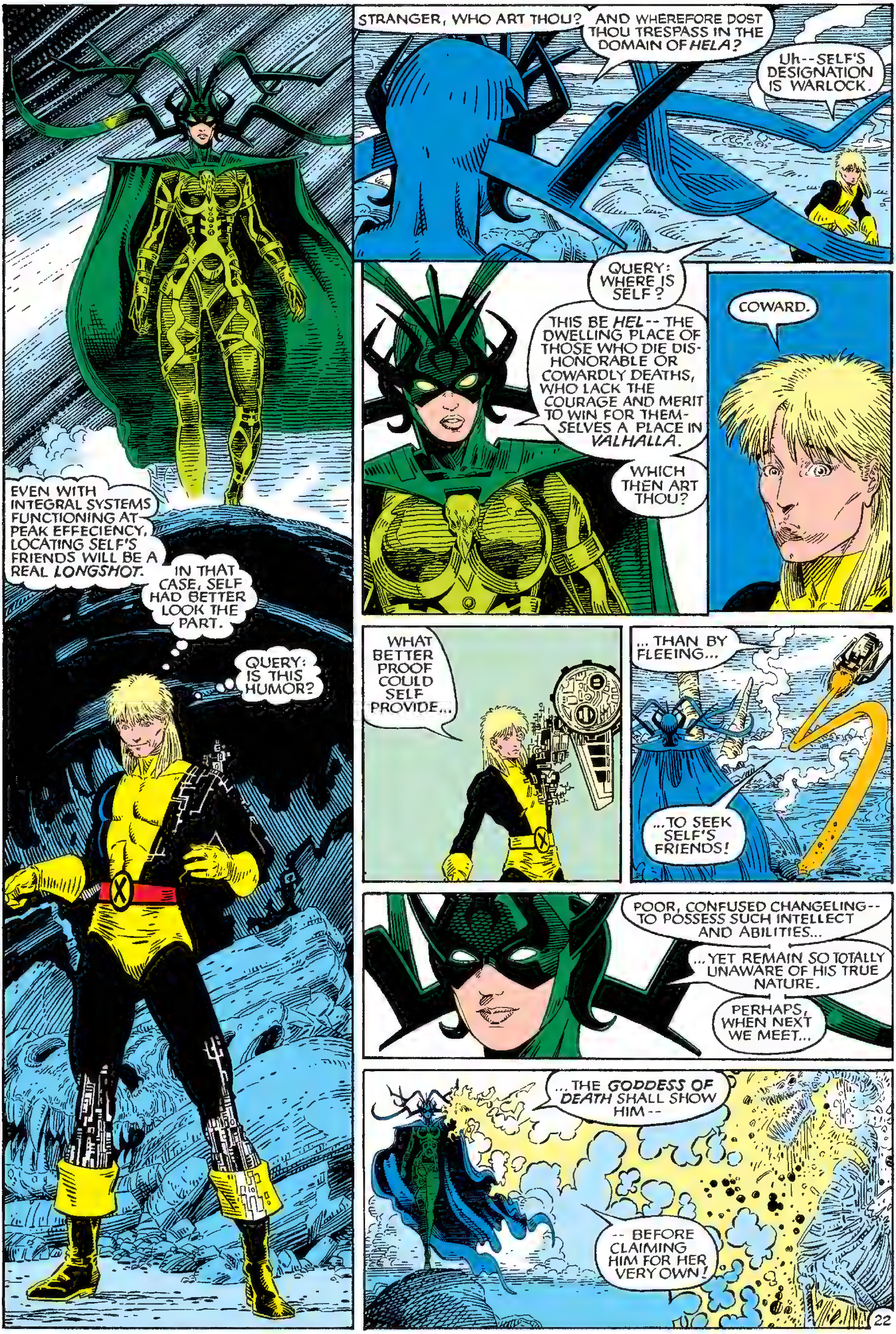

CYPHER...
Uh-oh.
SOMETHING'S GONE REAL WRONG WITH ILLYANA'S 'PORT-- I RECOGNIZE WHERE I AM, KIND OF-- IT'S A VIKING MEADHALL!
WHAT THE HECK IS THIS ALL ABOUT, ANYWAY?! WHO WAS THAT CRAZY LADY, WHY'D SHE PICK ON *US?!!*
THANK GOODNESS *MY* MUTANT POWER'S A FACULTY FOR LANGUAGES. AT LEAST I'LL BE ABLE TO TALK TO--
THIGVALD, TEACH THE WHELP MANNERS.
HEY! LEGGO!!
AYE, LORD HARALD!
SILENCE, SNOTNOSE! THOU'LT SPEAK WHEN SPOKEN TO, AN' KEEP A RESPECTFUL TONGUE IN THY HEAD--
--OR *LOSE* IT!
OWHW!
KNOW, BOY, THAT I BE *HARALD EINARSON*-- NAME THYSELF AND STATE THY BUSINESS.
MIGHT HE BE A PALADIN OF ASGARD, M'LORD JARL? HE MATERIALIZED OUT OF THIN AIR, AS THOSE GODS OFT DO--
--AND HIS GOLDEN HAIR AND SEA-BLUE EYES MARK HIM AS VANIR BLOOD.

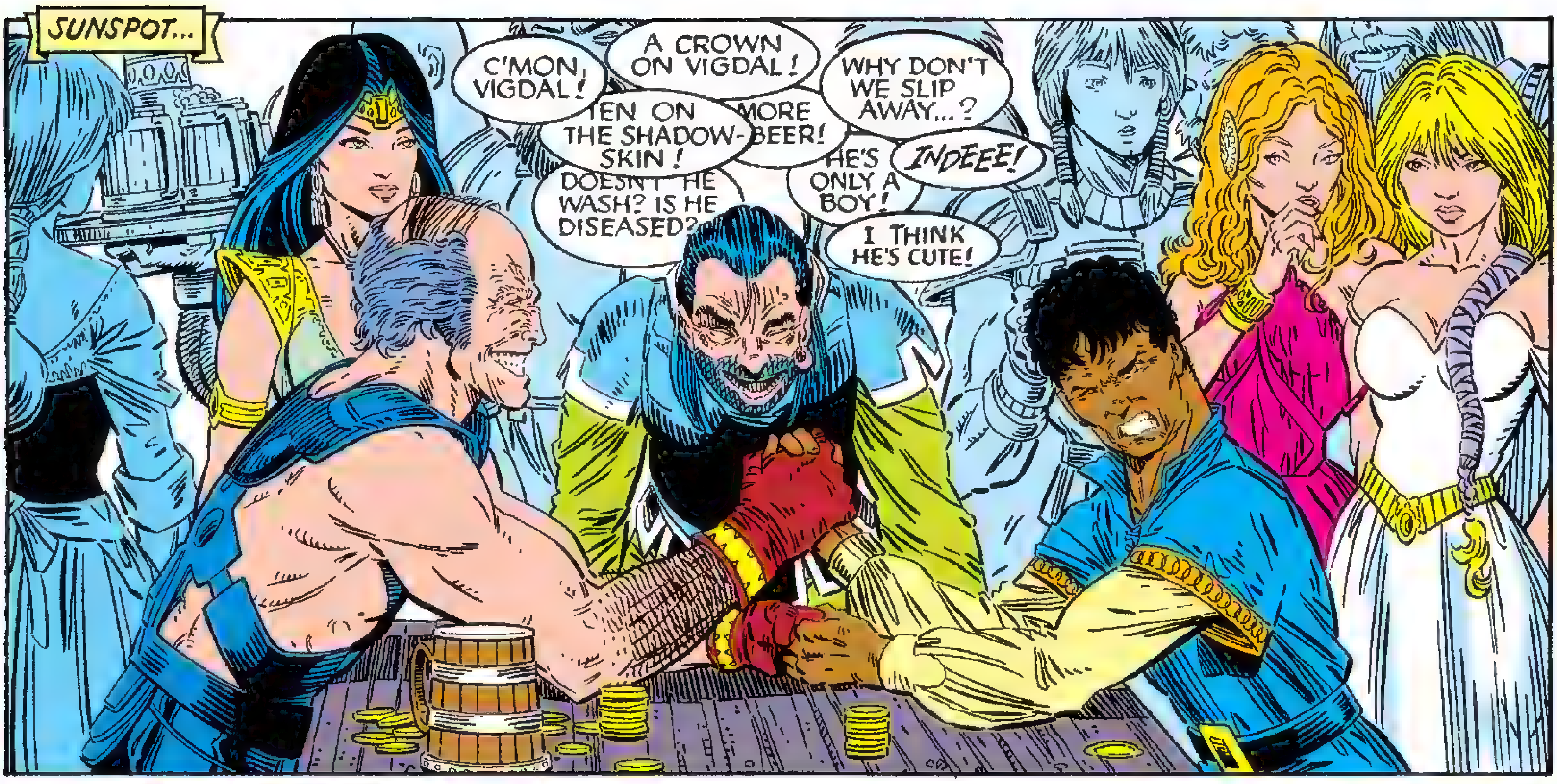

THIN BLOOD, AN' YOU ASK ME, WENCH -- NO SON OF ASGARD, NOR OF VANAHEIM, WAS E'ER SO PUNY.
AN' THIS OUTLANDISH GARB -- !
CUT IT OUT, WILLYA?!
PUSH PUSH PUSH
I MEAN IT, BUSTER --
-- *QUIT SHOVING!*
A FAIR CHALLENGE, WHELP -- WHICH I'LL ANSWER WITH *STEEL!*
SMART MOVE, RAMSEY.
NICE KNOWING YOU, WORLD.
SHEATHE THY BLADE, THIGVALD, THOU LUMPEN OAF!
THE LAD HATH SPUNK. LET HIM PROVE HIS METTLE...
... AGAINST SOMEONE MORE HIS SIZE.
THE SERVING MAID --?!
THERE HAS TO BE A CATCH -- BUT IT'S NOT AS IF I HAVE A CHOICE.
CRIPES -- THIS WEIGHS A *TON!*
I THINK I AM IN BIG TROUBLE!
NO GOD, NO HERO --
-- HE IS LESS THAN NOTHING.
THEN LET THAT BE HIS FATE -- TO *BE* LESS THAN NOTHING...
... BY WEARING THE COLLAR OF A *THRALL!*

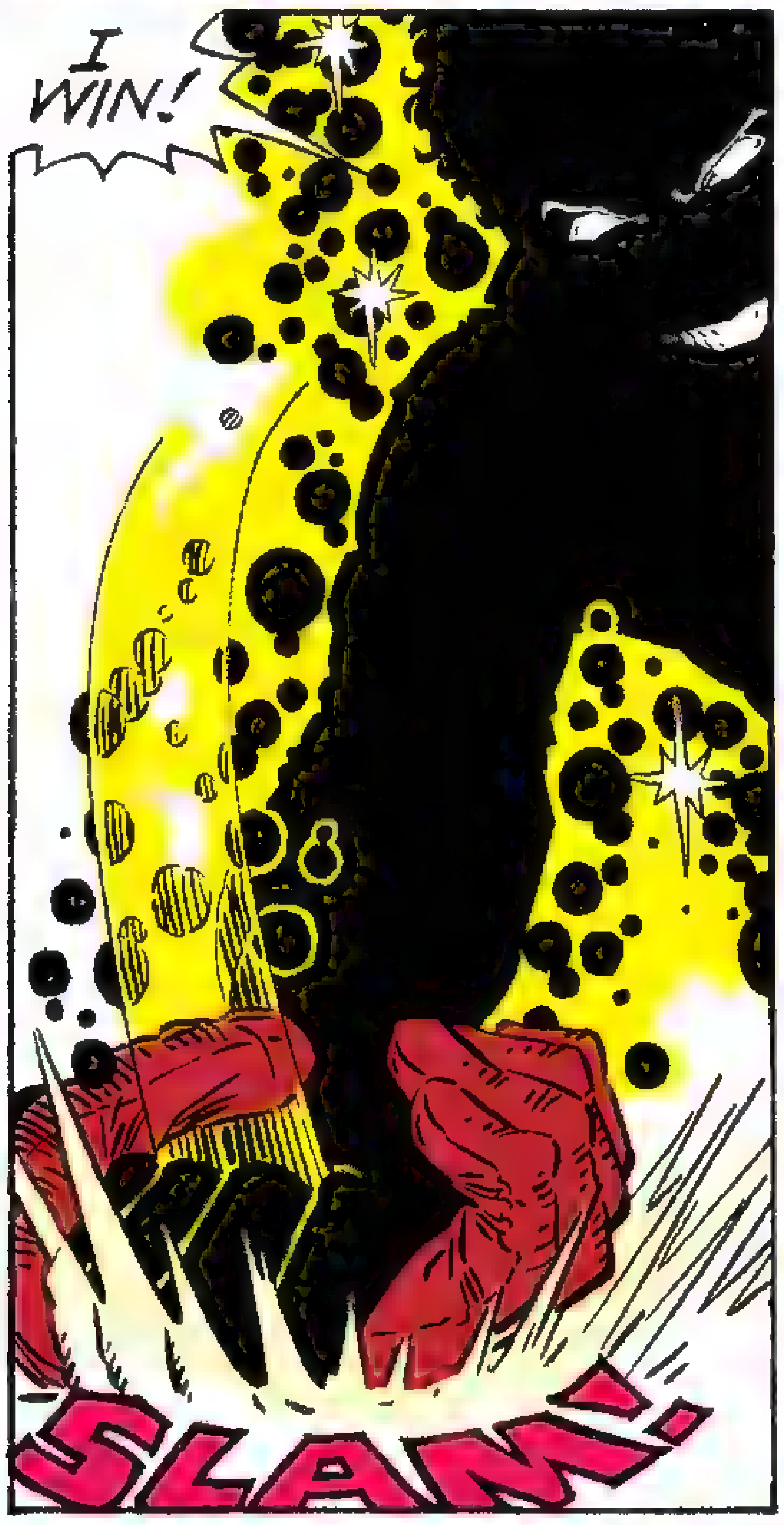

WOLFSBANE...
SAINTS PRESERVE ME, THOSE ARE--
--GIANTS!
I TELL THEE, I *SAW* THE CUR!
LOOK, BROTHERS, I HAVE FOUND A REINDEER! IT CERTAINLY IS A DECENT REINDEER, I MUST SAY!
SHALL I EAT IT NOW FOR LUNCH--FOR I AM FAMISHED--OR SAVE IT FOR LATER?
Och, YON POOR BEASTIE!
WHERE ARE THE OTHERS?! P'RHAPS, IF I SHIFT TO MY WOLFEN FORM, I CAN *MINDLINK* WITH DANI--?!
DANI-- ANSWER, PLEASE!
WHY CAN'T SHE HEAR ME?!
COULD IT MEAN SHE'S--
YYIII!!
THE *WOLF,* oh MY BRUVVERS!
CATCH IT, SMASH IT, *KILL IT!*
SAINTS HA' MERCY--'TIS *ME* THEY'RE AFTER!
I-- *ULP?!?*
MY BRUVVERS, *HELP--*
--I YAM *FALLIN'!*
BOOM!

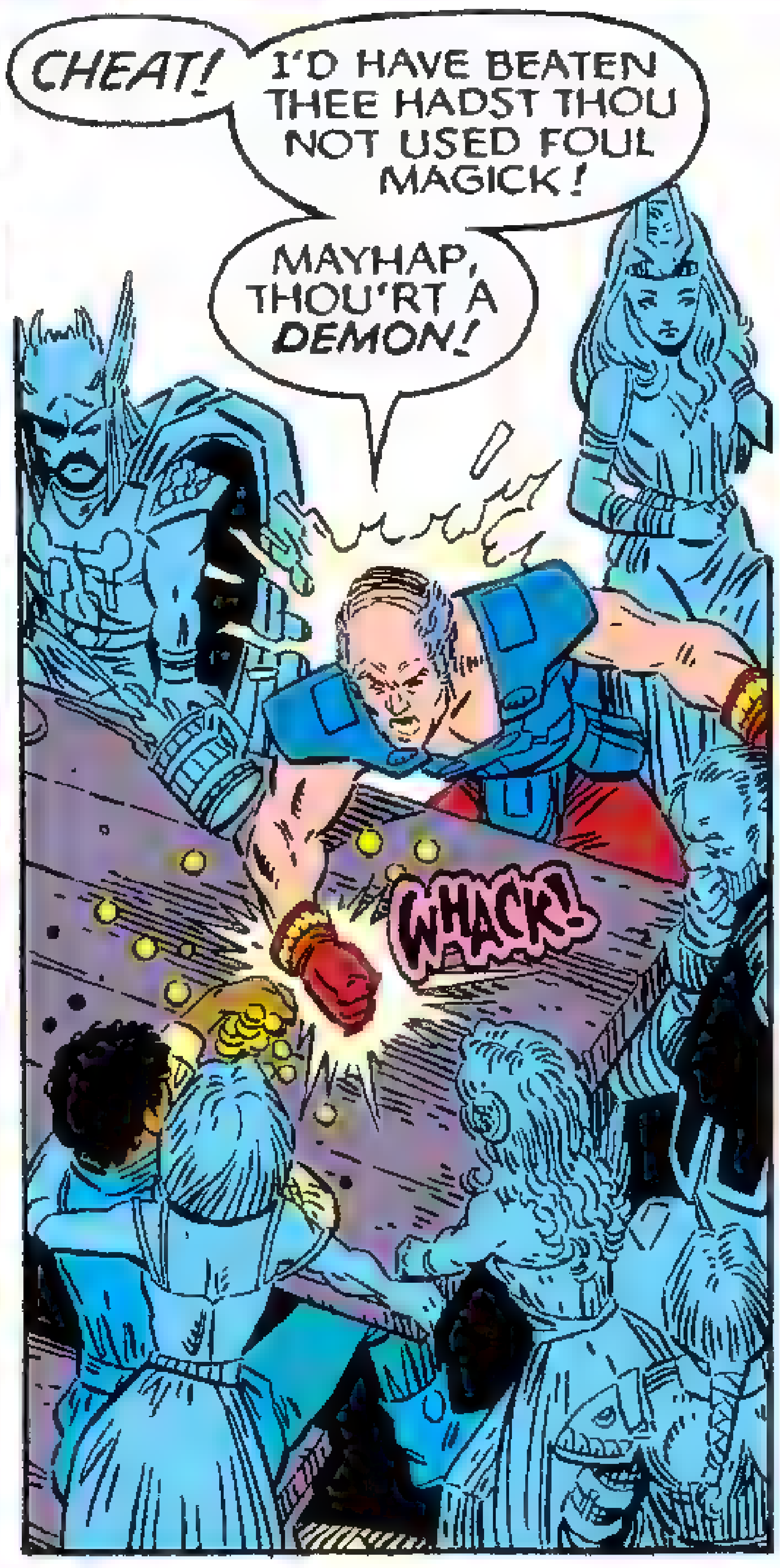

OWWEHRR!
CHOMP!
PARDON ME, BROTHER, BUT YOU SEEM TO BE STANDING ON MY FOOT, I MUST SAY!
AAEEEIIGHK! MY JUICE IS FALLIN' OUT!
AAEEGH!
BROTHER, HAVE A CARE--
--WE ARE FALLING OVER!
KA BOOM BOOM BOOM
HAHA
HO HO
HEE HEE
GUFFAW
LIKED THAT, DID THEE?
Gasp!
YOU SAVED ME?!
I COULD DO NO LESS, FAIR LADY...
... SINCE I WAS THEIR TRUE QUARRY.
THANK YOU.
'TWAS MY PLEASURE.
THEY'LL BE UP SOON. IF I WERE THEE, I'D BE FAR AWAY BY THEN.
BUT WHERE SHALL I GO?
WITH ME.
BUT MY FRIENDS-- I MUST FIND...
SUIT THYSELF, LASS! FAREWELL!
WHAT AM I TO DO-- HE'S SO HANDSOME, AN' MAKES ME FEEL SO STRANGE--
--WAIT! PLEASE, WAIT!

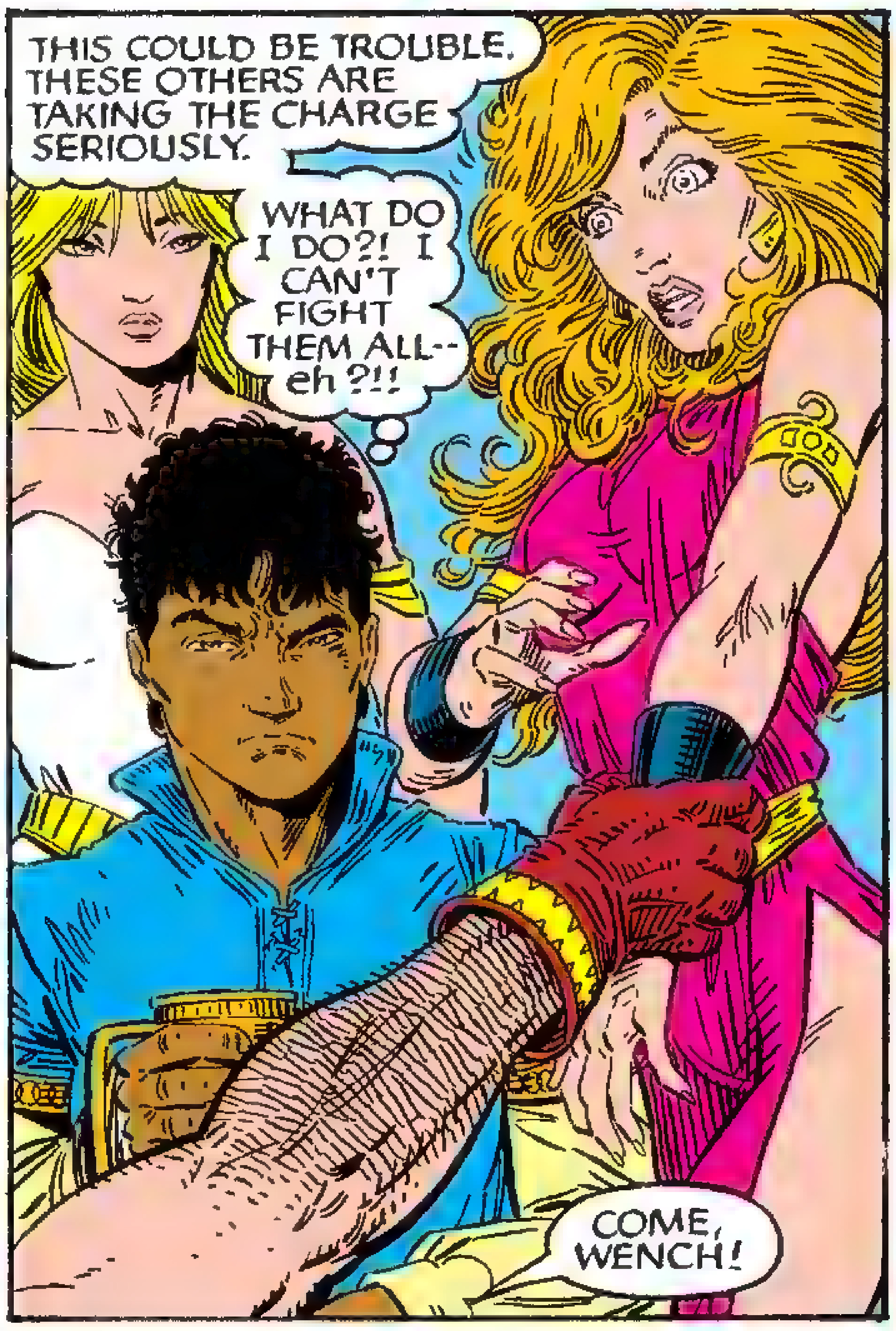

WARLOCK...
OBSERVATION: SEVERE DISRUPTION OF TELEPORTATION MATRIX HAS RESULTED IN CONSIDERABLE SPACIO-TEMPORAL DISLOCATION. CURRENT WHEREABOUTS, UNKNOWN.
SELF STATUS: INTEGRAL SYSTEMS WHOLE, FUNCTION UNIMPAIRED-- THANK THE MAKER-- BUT LIFEGLOW REDUCED TO SUBSISTANCE LEVELS. IF SUSTENANCE NOT OBTAINED IN IMMEDIATE TIME FRAME...
...SELF WILL BECOME *INERT!*
SCANNING FOR FRIENDS--
--BUT LACK OF POWER LIMITS SELF'S RANGE.
SCANNING AS WELL FOR CONSUMABLE ORGANICS.
ROAR!
CONFLICT! IS THIS ENTITY SENTIENT? IT DOES NOT RESPOND TO SELF'S TRANSMISSIONS.
CHIEFRIEND DANI SAID SELF WAS *NEVER* TO CONSUME SUCH LARGE-FORM ORGANICS WITHOUT HER PERMISSION. BUT SHE IS NOT HERE TO ASK...
...AND ENTITY'S ATTITUDE IS HOSTILE.
FORGIVE SELF, DANI.
ENTITY INFECTED WITH GENETIC VIRUS.
TRANSFORMATION TO TECHNO-ORGANIC FORM COMPLETE. LIFEGLOW ABSORBED. ENTITY RENDERED INERT.
SELF FULLY FUNCTIONAL!

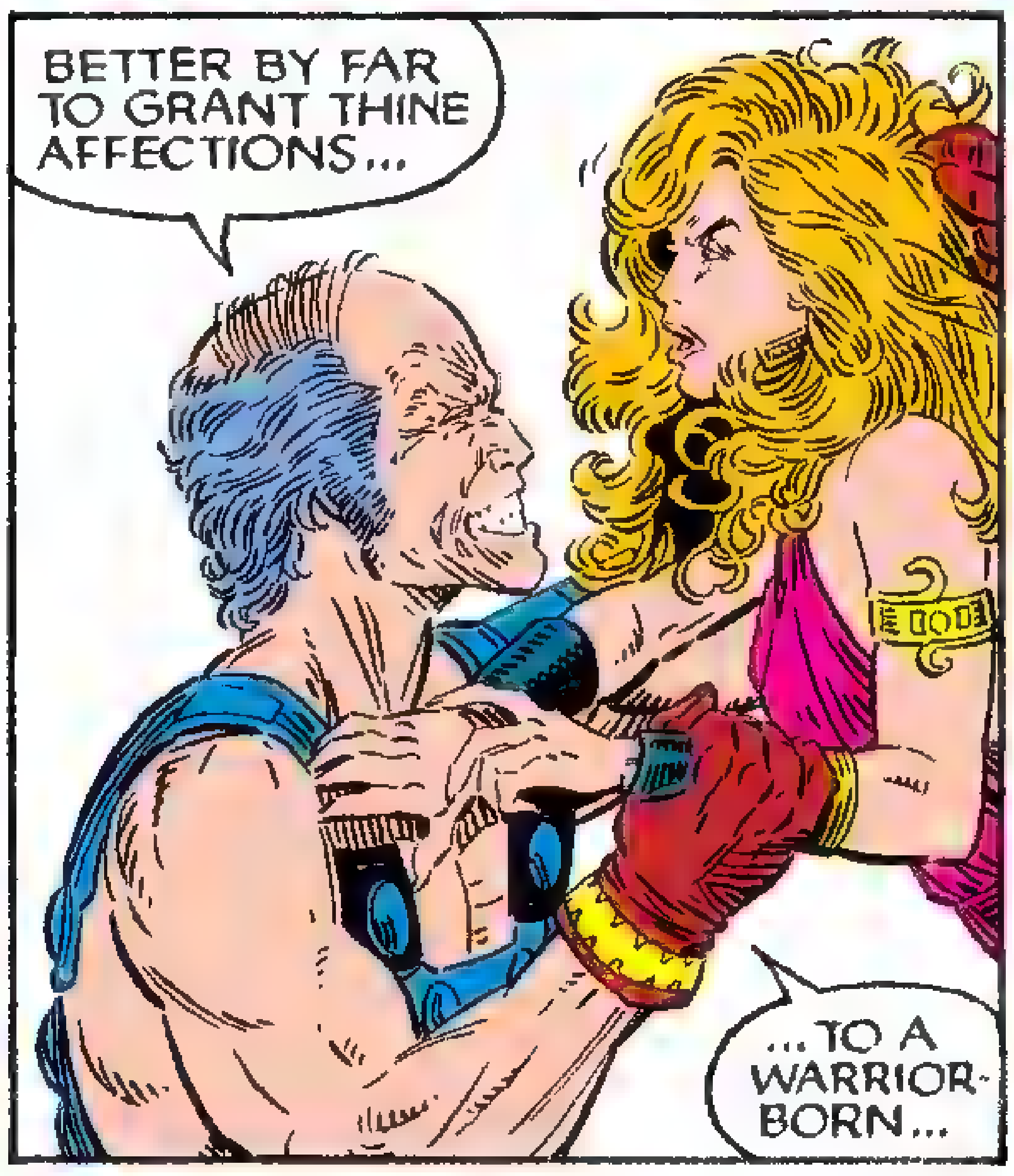

EVEN WITH INTEGRAL SYSTEMS FUNCTIONING AT PEAK EFFECIENCY, LOCATING SELF'S FRIENDS WILL BE A REAL *LONGSHOT*.
IN THAT CASE, SELF HAD BETTER LOOK THE PART.
QUERY: IS THIS HUMOR?
STRANGER, WHO ART THOU?
AND WHEREFORE DOST THOU TRESPASS IN THE DOMAIN OF *HELA?*
Uh--SELF'S DESIGNATION IS WARLOCK.
QUERY: WHERE IS SELF?
THIS BE *HEL*-- THE DWELLING PLACE OF THOSE WHO DIE DISHONORABLE OR COWARDLY DEATHS, WHO LACK THE COURAGE AND MERIT TO WIN FOR THEMSELVES A PLACE IN *VALHALLA*.
WHICH THEN ART THOU?
COWARD.
WHAT BETTER PROOF COULD SELF PROVIDE...
... THAN BY FLEEING...
...TO SEEK SELF'S FRIENDS!
POOR, CONFUSED CHANGELING-- TO POSSESS SUCH INTELLECT AND ABILITIES...
...YET REMAIN SO TOTALLY UNAWARE OF HIS TRUE NATURE.
PERHAPS, WHEN NEXT WE MEET...
...THE *GODDESS OF DEATH* SHALL SHOW HIM --
-- BEFORE CLAIMING HIM FOR HER VERY OWN!

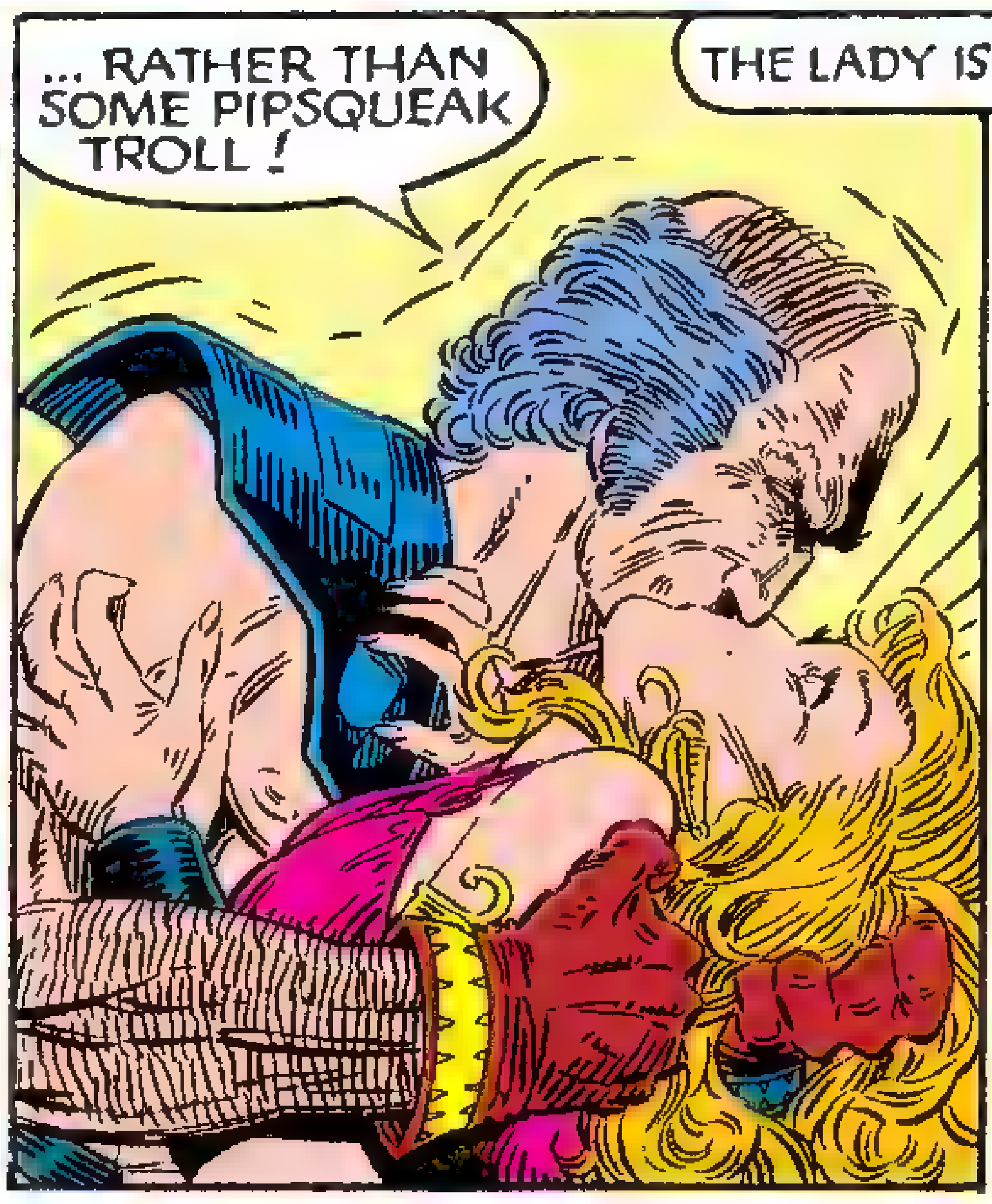

SUNSPOT...
C'MON, VIGDAL!
A CROWN ON VIGDAL!
TEN ON THE SHADOW-SKIN!
DOESN'T HE WASH? IS HE DISEASED?
MORE BEER!
WHY DON'T WE SLIP AWAY...?
HE'S ONLY A BOY!
INDEEE!
I THINK HE'S CUTE!

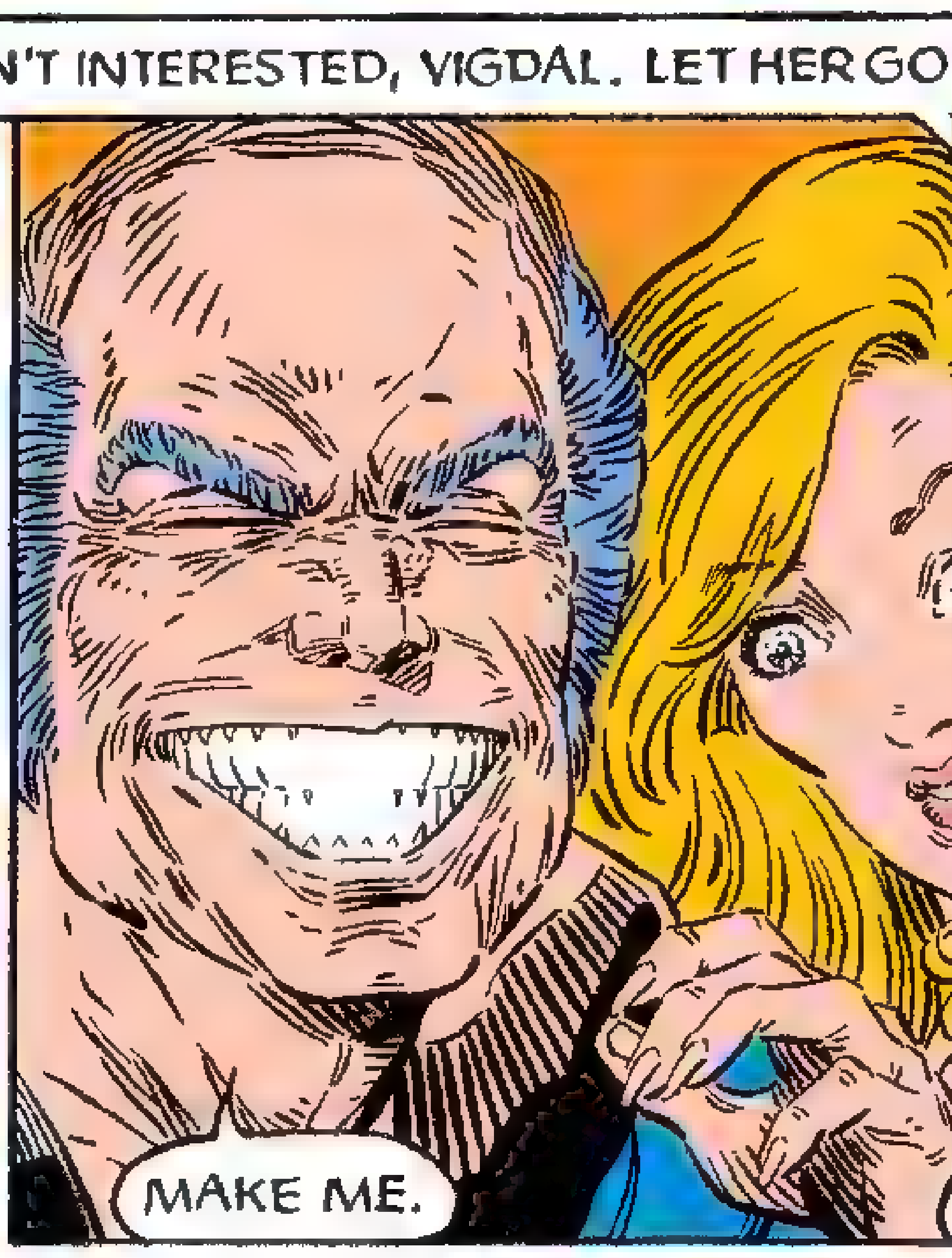

I WIN!
SLAM!

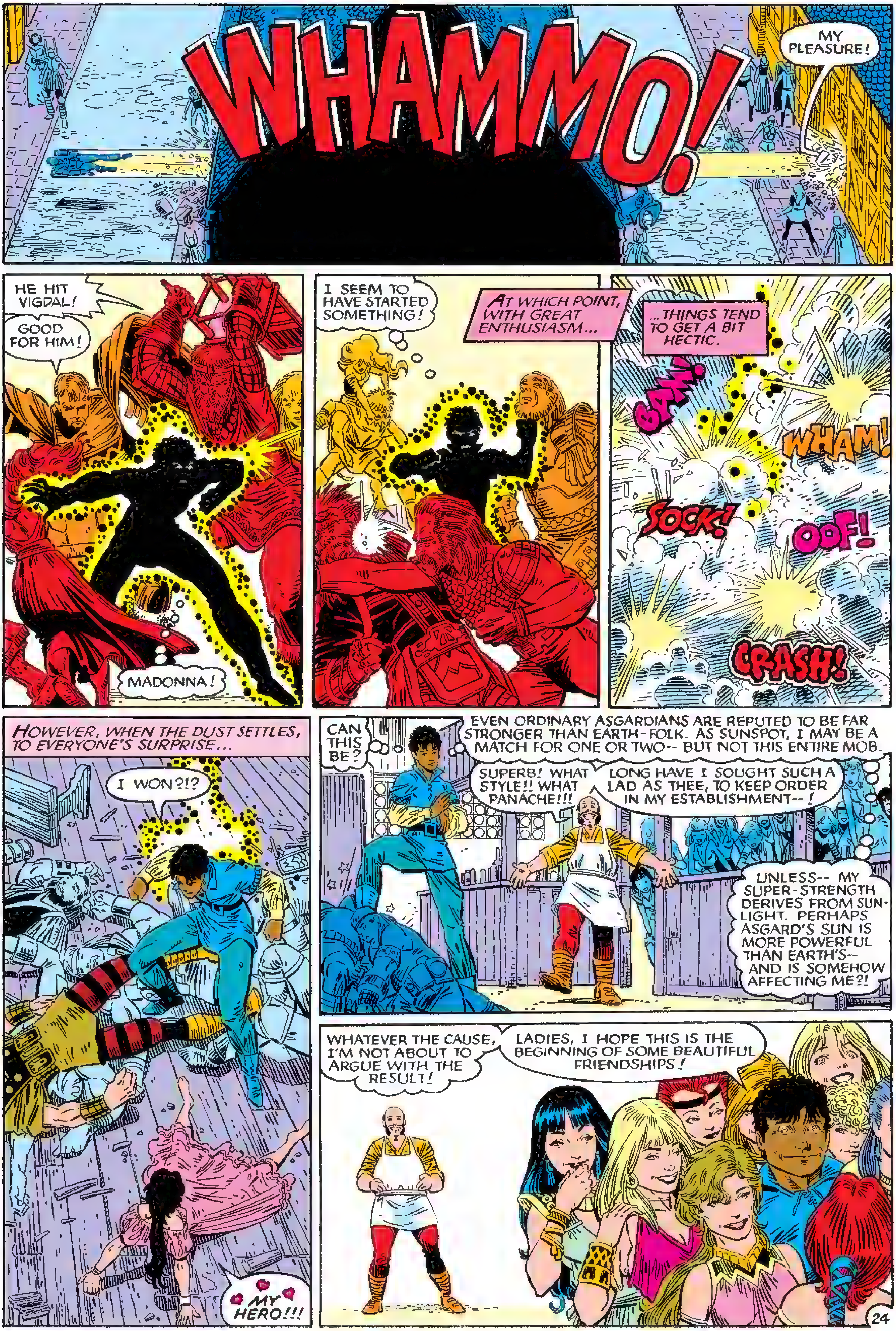

CHEAT!
I'D HAVE BEATEN THEE HADST THOU NOT USED FOUL MAGICK!
MAYHAP, THOU'RT A DEMON!
WHACK!

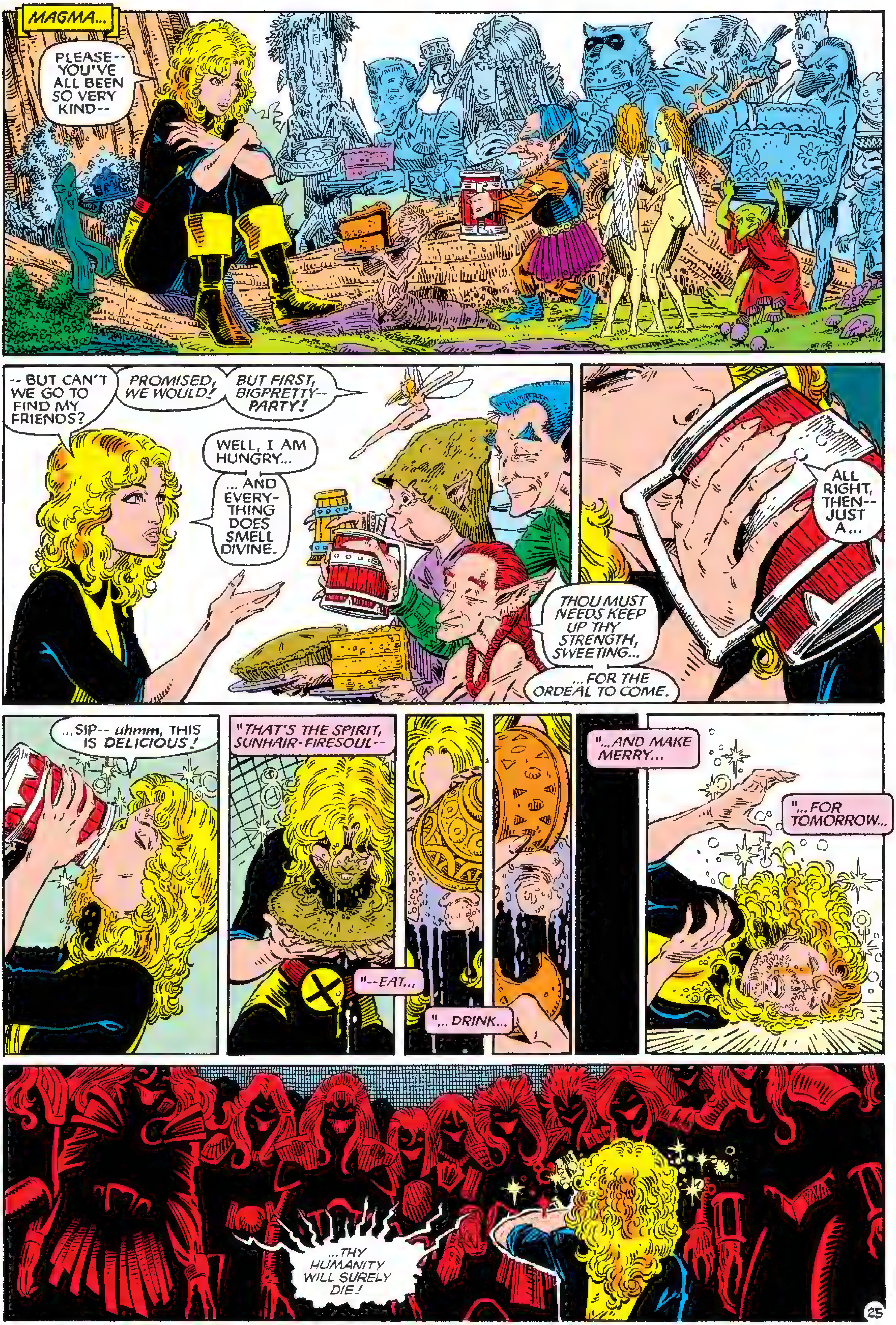

THIS COULD BE TROUBLE. THESE OTHERS ARE TAKING THE CHARGE SERIOUSLY.
WHAT DO I DO?! I CAN'T FIGHT THEM ALL-- eh ?!!
COME, WENCH!

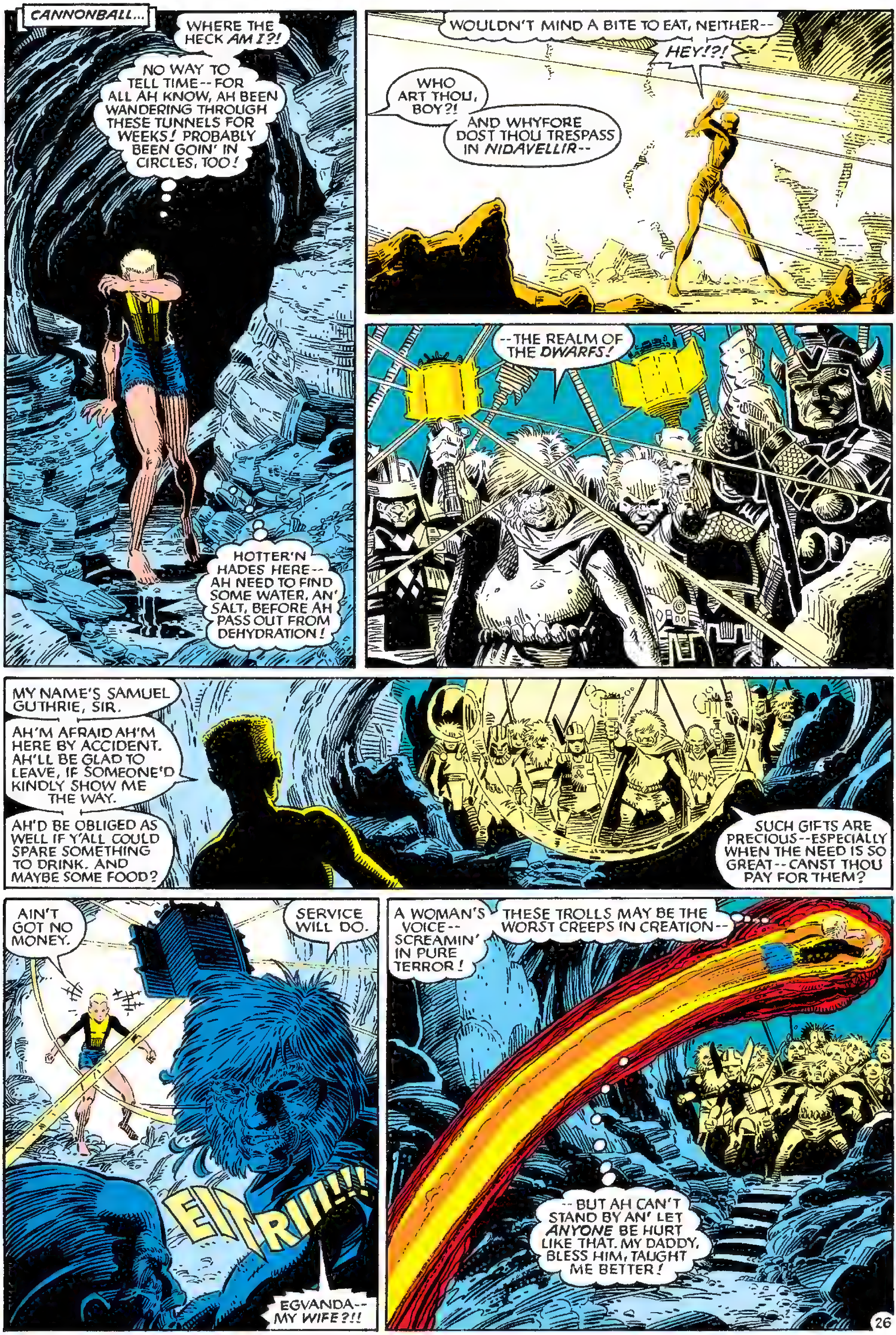

BETTER BY FAR TO GRANT THINE AFFECTIONS...
...TO A WARRIOR-BORN...

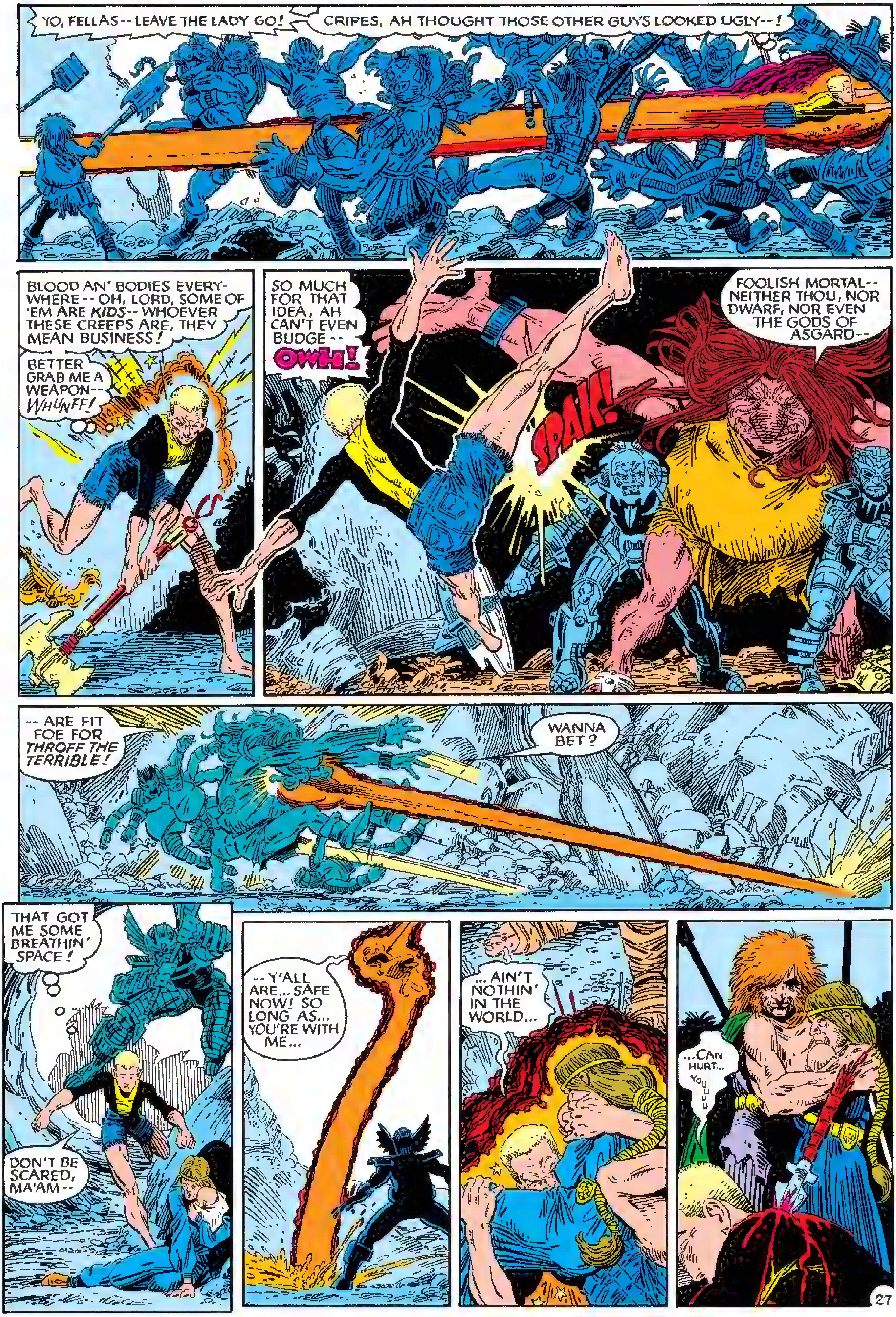

... RATHER THAN SOME PIPSQUEAK TROLL!

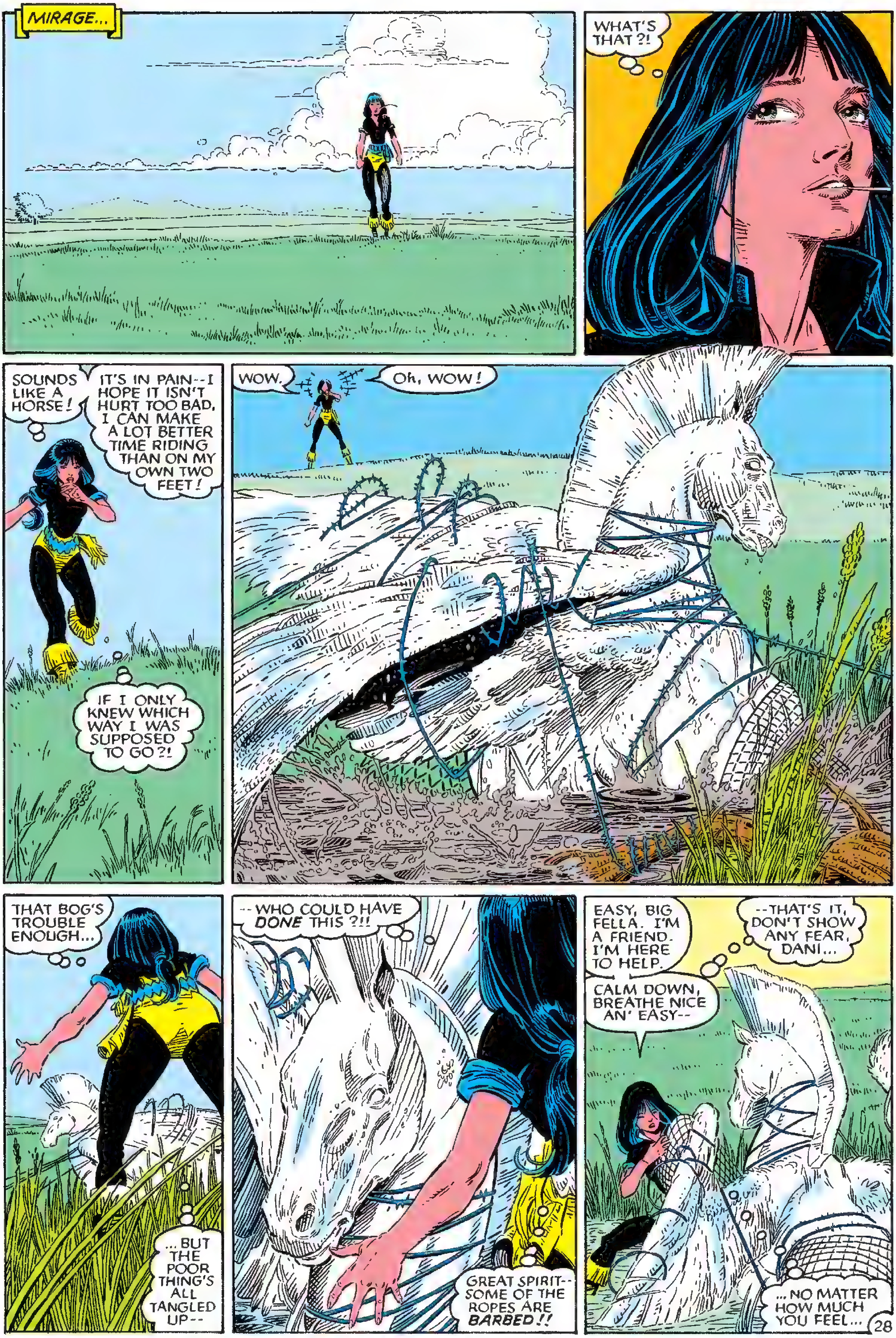

THE LADY ISN'T INTERESTED, VIGDAL. LET HER GO.
MAKE ME.

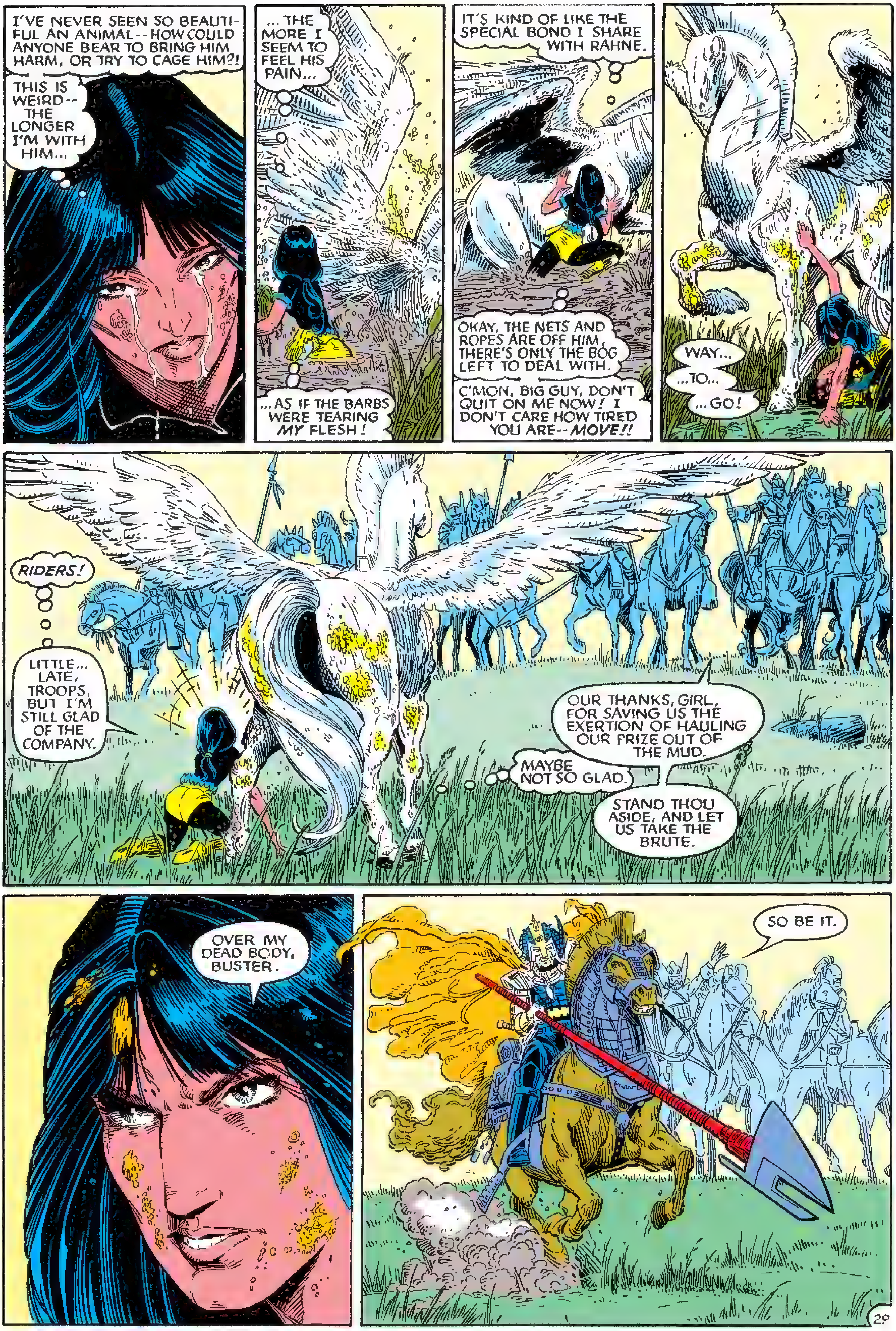

WHAMMO!
MY PLEASURE!
HE HIT VIGDAL!
GOOD FOR HIM!
MADONNA!
I SEEM TO HAVE STARTED SOMETHING!
AT WHICH POINT, WITH GREAT ENTHUSIASM...
...THINGS TEND TO GET A BIT HECTIC.
BAM!
WHAM!
SOCK!
OOF!
CRASH!
HOWEVER, WHEN THE DUST SETTLES, TO EVERYONE'S SURPRISE...
I WON?!?
MY HERO!!!
CAN THIS BE?
EVEN ORDINARY ASGARDIANS ARE REPUTED TO BE FAR STRONGER THAN EARTH-FOLK. AS SUNSPOT, I MAY BE A MATCH FOR ONE OR TWO-- BUT NOT THIS ENTIRE MOB.
SUPERB! WHAT STYLE!! WHAT PANACHE!!!
LONG HAVE I SOUGHT SUCH A LAD AS THEE, TO KEEP ORDER IN MY ESTABLISHMENT-- !
UNLESS-- MY SUPER-STRENGTH DERIVES FROM SUNLIGHT. PERHAPS ASGARD'S SUN IS MORE POWERFUL THAN EARTH'S-- AND IS SOMEHOW AFFECTING ME?!
WHATEVER THE CAUSE, I'M NOT ABOUT TO ARGUE WITH THE RESULT!
LADIES, I HOPE THIS IS THE BEGINNING OF SOME BEAUTIFUL FRIENDSHIPS!

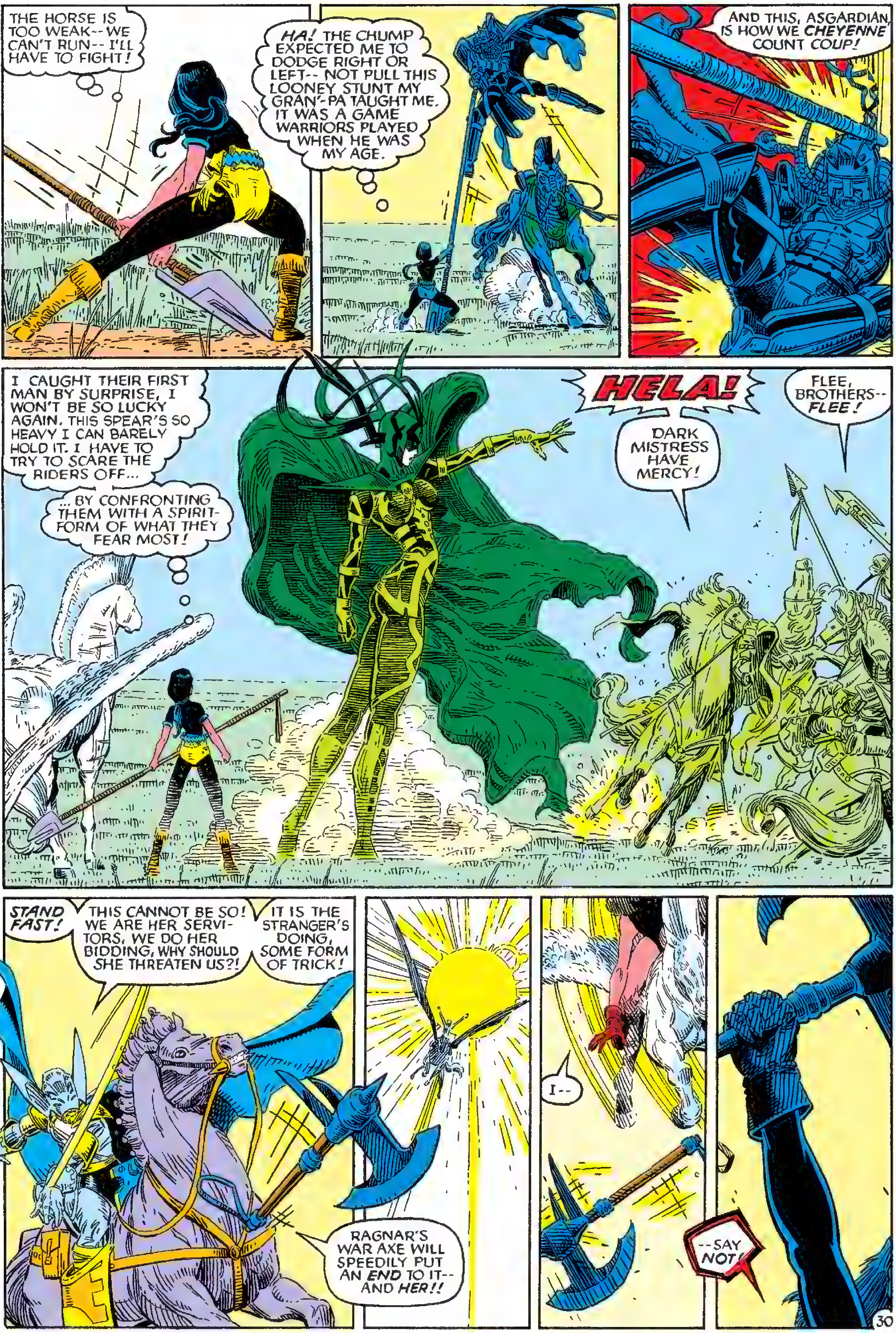

MAGMA...
PLEASE-- YOU'VE ALL BEEN SO VERY KIND--
-- BUT CAN'T WE GO TO FIND MY FRIENDS?
PROMISED, WE WOULD!
BUT FIRST, BIGPRETTY-- PARTY!
WELL, I AM HUNGRY...
... AND EVERYTHING DOES SMELL DIVINE.
THOU MUST NEEDS KEEP UP THY STRENGTH, SWEETING...
... FOR THE ORDEAL TO COME.
ALL RIGHT, THEN-- JUST A...
... SIP-- uhmm, THIS IS DELICIOUS!
"THAT'S THE SPIRIT, SUNHAIR-FIRESOUL--
"--EAT...
"... DRINK...
"... AND MAKE MERRY...
"... FOR TOMORROW...
... THY HUMANITY WILL SURELY DIE!

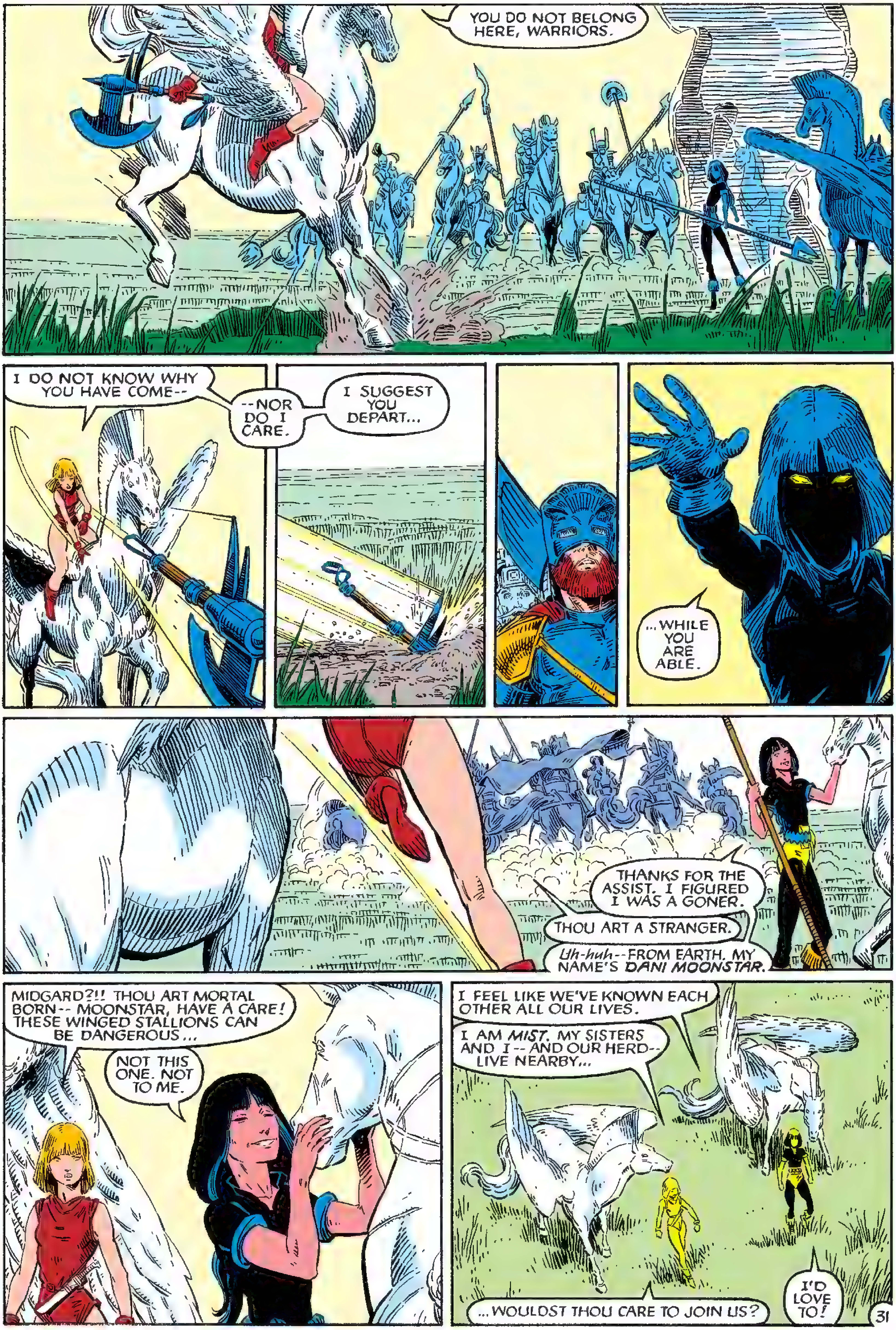

CANNONBALL...
WHERE THE HECK AM I?!
NO WAY TO TELL TIME -- FOR ALL AH KNOW, AH BEEN WANDERING THROUGH THESE TUNNELS FOR WEEKS! PROBABLY BEEN GOIN' IN CIRCLES, TOO!
HOTTER'N HADES HERE -- AH NEED TO FIND SOME WATER, AN' SALT, BEFORE AH PASS OUT FROM DEHYDRATION!
WOULDN'T MIND A BITE TO EAT, NEITHER --
HEY!?!
WHO ART THOU, BOY?!
AND WHYFORE DOST THOU TRESPASS IN NIDAVELLIR --
-- THE REALM OF THE DWARFS!
MY NAME'S SAMUEL GUTHRIE, SIR.
AH'M AFRAID AH'M HERE BY ACCIDENT. AH'LL BE GLAD TO LEAVE, IF SOMEONE'D KINDLY SHOW ME THE WAY.
AH'D BE OBLIGED AS WELL IF Y'ALL COULD SPARE SOMETHING TO DRINK. AND MAYBE SOME FOOD?
SUCH GIFTS ARE PRECIOUS -- ESPECIALLY WHEN THE NEED IS SO GREAT -- CANST THOU PAY FOR THEM?
AIN'T GOT NO MONEY.
SERVICE WILL DO.
EIIIRIIII!!!
EGVANDA -- MY WIFE?!!
A WOMAN'S VOICE -- SCREAMIN' IN PURE TERROR!
THESE TROLLS MAY BE THE WORST CREEPS IN CREATION --
-- BUT AH CAN'T STAND BY AN' LET ANYONE BE HURT LIKE THAT. MY DADDY, BLESS HIM, TAUGHT ME BETTER!

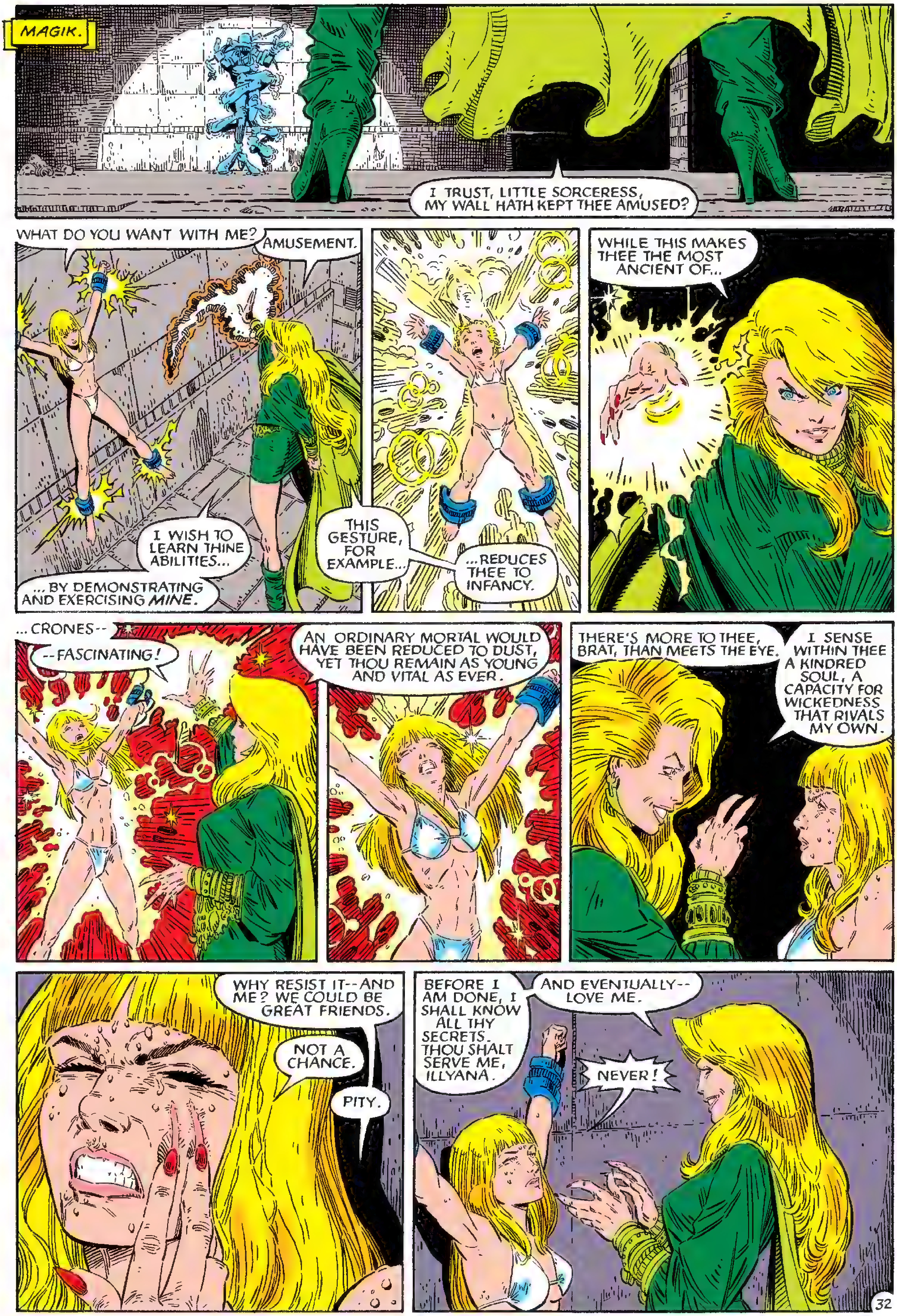

YO, FELLAS-- LEAVE THE LADY GO!
CRIPES, AH THOUGHT THOSE OTHER GUYS LOOKED UGLY--!
BLOOD AN' BODIES EVERYWHERE-- OH, LORD, SOME OF 'EM ARE *KIDS*-- WHOEVER THESE CREEPS ARE, THEY MEAN BUSINESS!
BETTER GRAB ME A WEAPON-- *WHUNFF!*
SO MUCH FOR THAT IDEA, AH CAN'T EVEN BUDGE-- OWH!
SPAK!
FOOLISH MORTAL-- NEITHER THOU, NOR DWARF, NOR EVEN THE GODS OF ASGARD--
-- ARE FIT FOE FOR *THROFF THE TERRIBLE!*
WANNA BET?
THAT GOT ME SOME BREATHIN' SPACE!
DON'T BE SCARED, MA'AM--
-- Y'ALL ARE... SAFE NOW! SO LONG AS... YOU'RE WITH ME...
... AIN'T NOTHIN' IN THE WORLD...
...CAN HURT... YOUUU

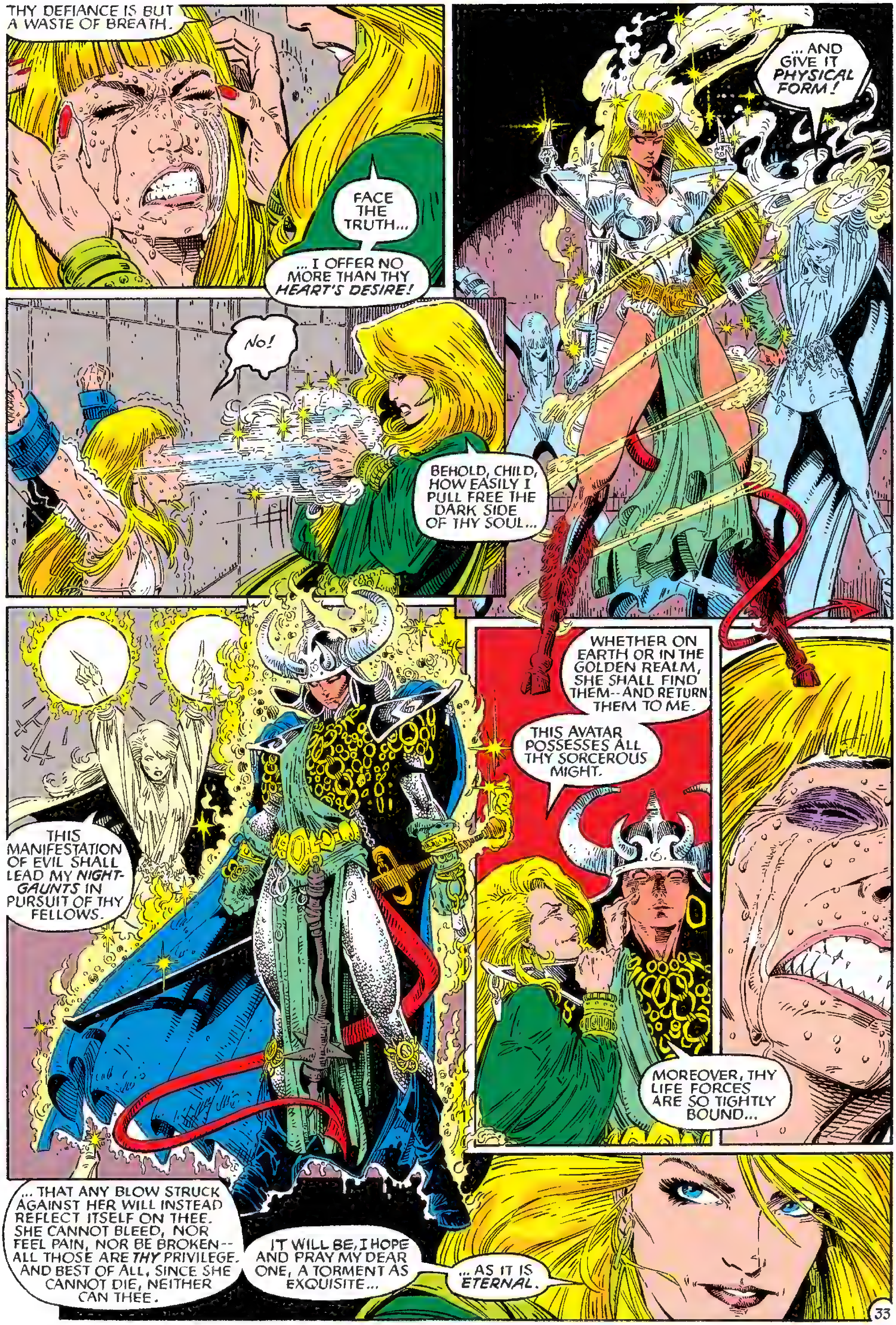

MIRAGE...
WHAT'S THAT?!
SOUNDS LIKE A HORSE!
IT'S IN PAIN--I HOPE IT ISN'T HURT TOO BAD. I CAN MAKE A LOT BETTER TIME RIDING THAN ON MY OWN TWO FEET!
IF I ONLY KNEW WHICH WAY I WAS SUPPOSED TO GO?!
WOW.
Oh, WOW!
THAT BOG'S TROUBLE ENOUGH...
...BUT THE POOR THING'S ALL TANGLED UP--
--WHO COULD HAVE *DONE* THIS?!!
GREAT SPIRIT--SOME OF THE ROPES ARE *BARBED!!*
EASY, BIG FELLA. I'M A FRIEND. I'M HERE TO HELP.
CALM DOWN, BREATHE NICE AN' EASY--
--THAT'S IT, DON'T SHOW ANY FEAR, DANI...
...NO MATTER HOW MUCH YOU FEEL...

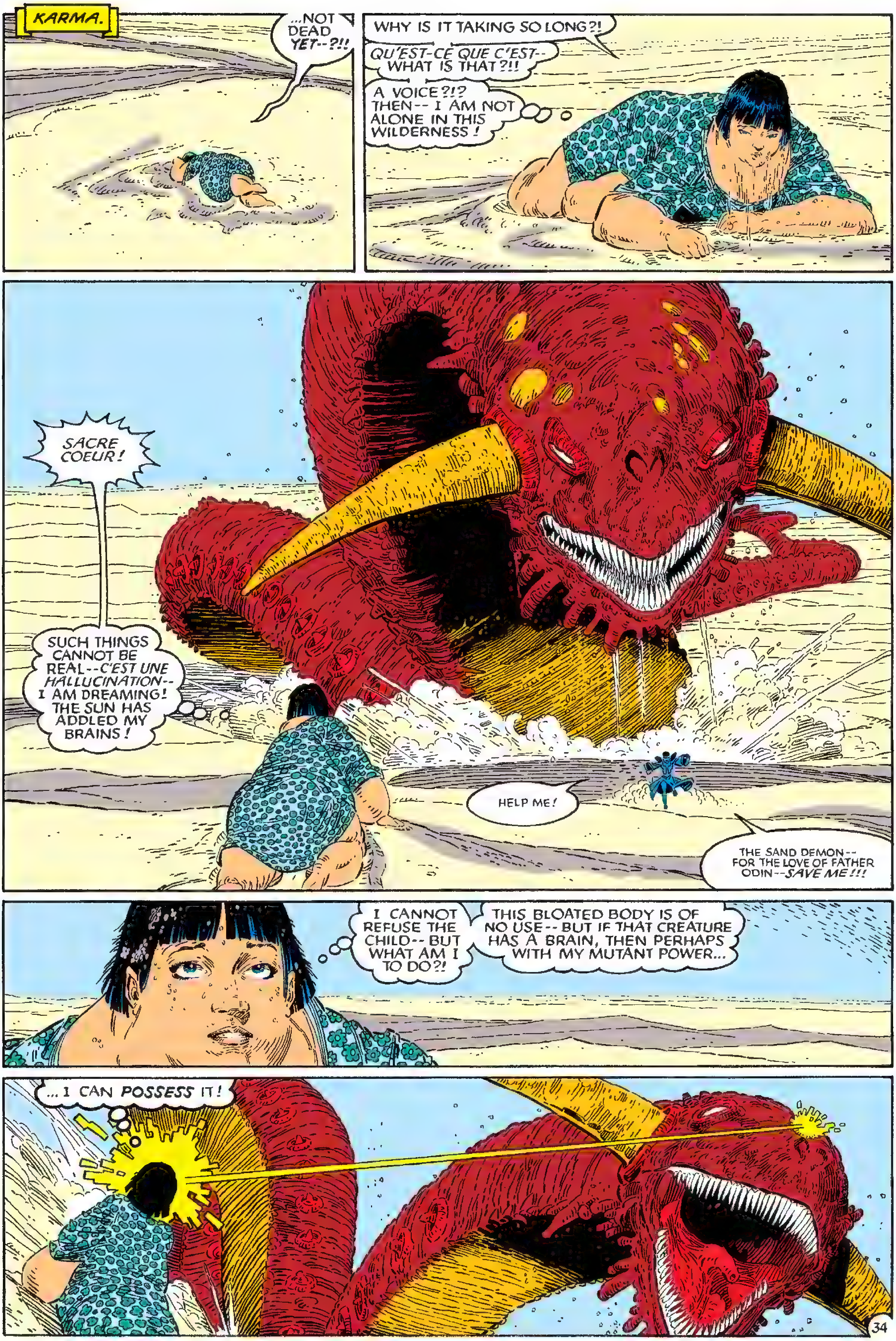

I'VE NEVER SEEN SO BEAUTIFUL AN ANIMAL--HOW COULD ANYONE BEAR TO BRING HIM HARM, OR TRY TO CAGE HIM?!
THIS IS WEIRD--THE LONGER I'M WITH HIM...
...THE MORE I SEEM TO FEEL HIS PAIN...
...AS IF THE BARBS WERE TEARING *MY* FLESH!
IT'S KIND OF LIKE THE SPECIAL BOND I SHARE WITH RAHNE.
OKAY, THE NETS AND ROPES ARE OFF HIM, THERE'S ONLY THE BOG LEFT TO DEAL WITH.
C'MON, BIG GUY, DON'T QUIT ON ME NOW! I DON'T CARE HOW TIRED YOU ARE--*MOVE!!*
WAY...
...TO...
...GO!
RIDERS!
LITTLE... LATE, TROOPS, BUT I'M STILL GLAD OF THE COMPANY.
OUR THANKS, GIRL, FOR *SAVING* US THE EXERTION OF HAULING OUR PRIZE OUT OF THE MUD.
MAYBE NOT SO GLAD.
STAND THOU ASIDE, AND LET US TAKE THE BRUTE.
OVER MY DEAD BODY, BUSTER.
SO BE IT.

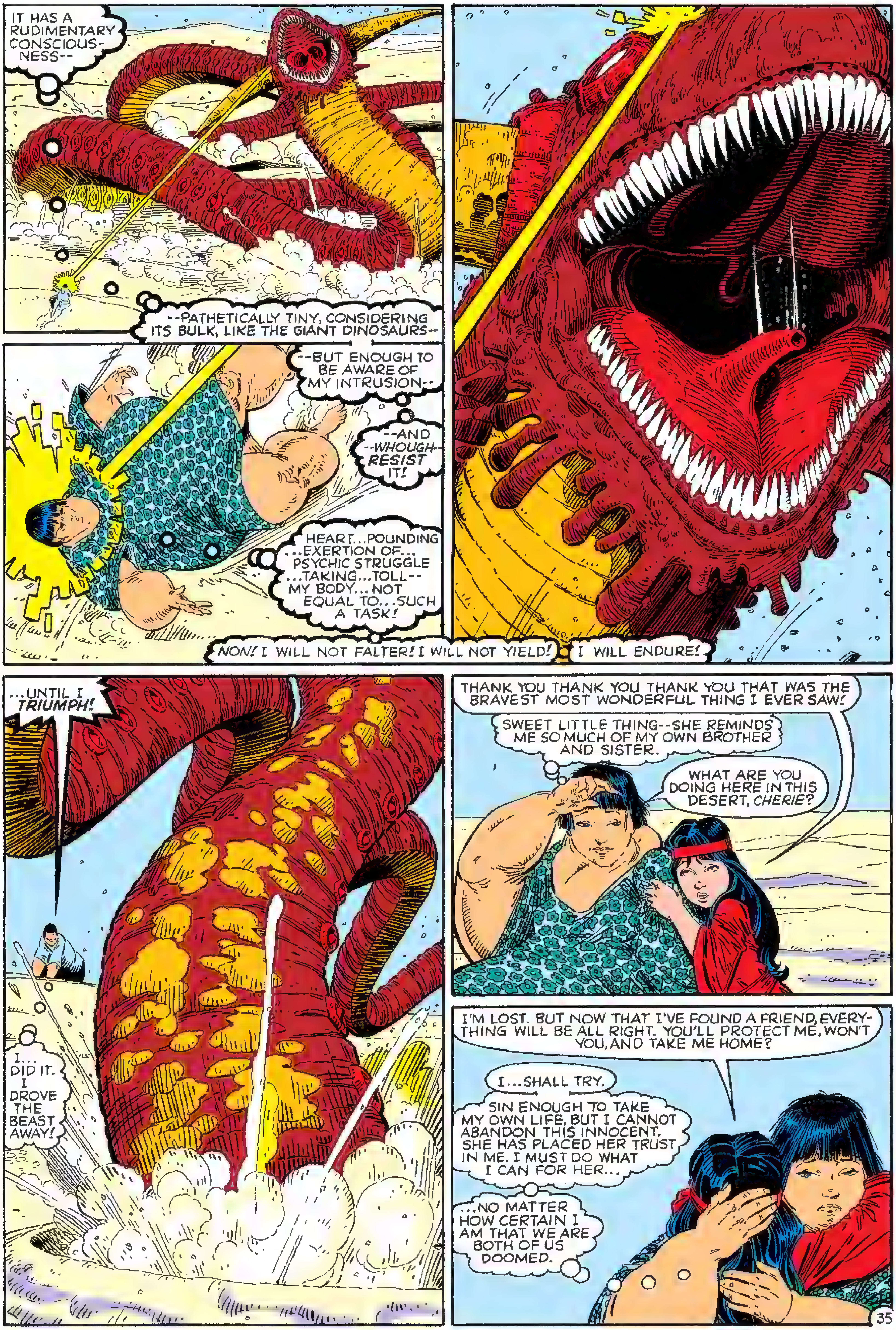

THE HORSE IS TOO WEAK-- WE CAN'T RUN-- I'LL HAVE TO FIGHT!
HA! THE CHUMP EXPECTED ME TO DODGE RIGHT OR LEFT-- NOT PULL THIS LOONEY STUNT MY GRAN'-PA TAUGHT ME. IT WAS A GAME WARRIORS PLAYED WHEN HE WAS MY AGE.
AND THIS, ASGARDIAN, IS HOW WE *CHEYENNE* COUNT *COUP!*
I CAUGHT THEIR FIRST MAN BY SURPRISE, I WON'T BE SO LUCKY AGAIN. THIS SPEAR'S SO HEAVY I CAN BARELY HOLD IT. I HAVE TO TRY TO SCARE THE RIDERS OFF...
...BY CONFRONTING THEM WITH A SPIRIT-FORM OF WHAT THEY FEAR MOST!
HELA!
DARK MISTRESS HAVE MERCY!
FLEE, BROTHERS-- *FLEE!*
STAND FAST!
THIS CANNOT BE SO! WE ARE HER SERVITORS, WE DO HER BIDDING, WHY SHOULD SHE THREATEN US?!
IT IS THE STRANGER'S DOING, SOME FORM OF TRICK!
RAGNAR'S WAR AXE WILL SPEEDILY PUT AN *END* TO IT-- AND *HER!!*
I--
--SAY *NOT!*

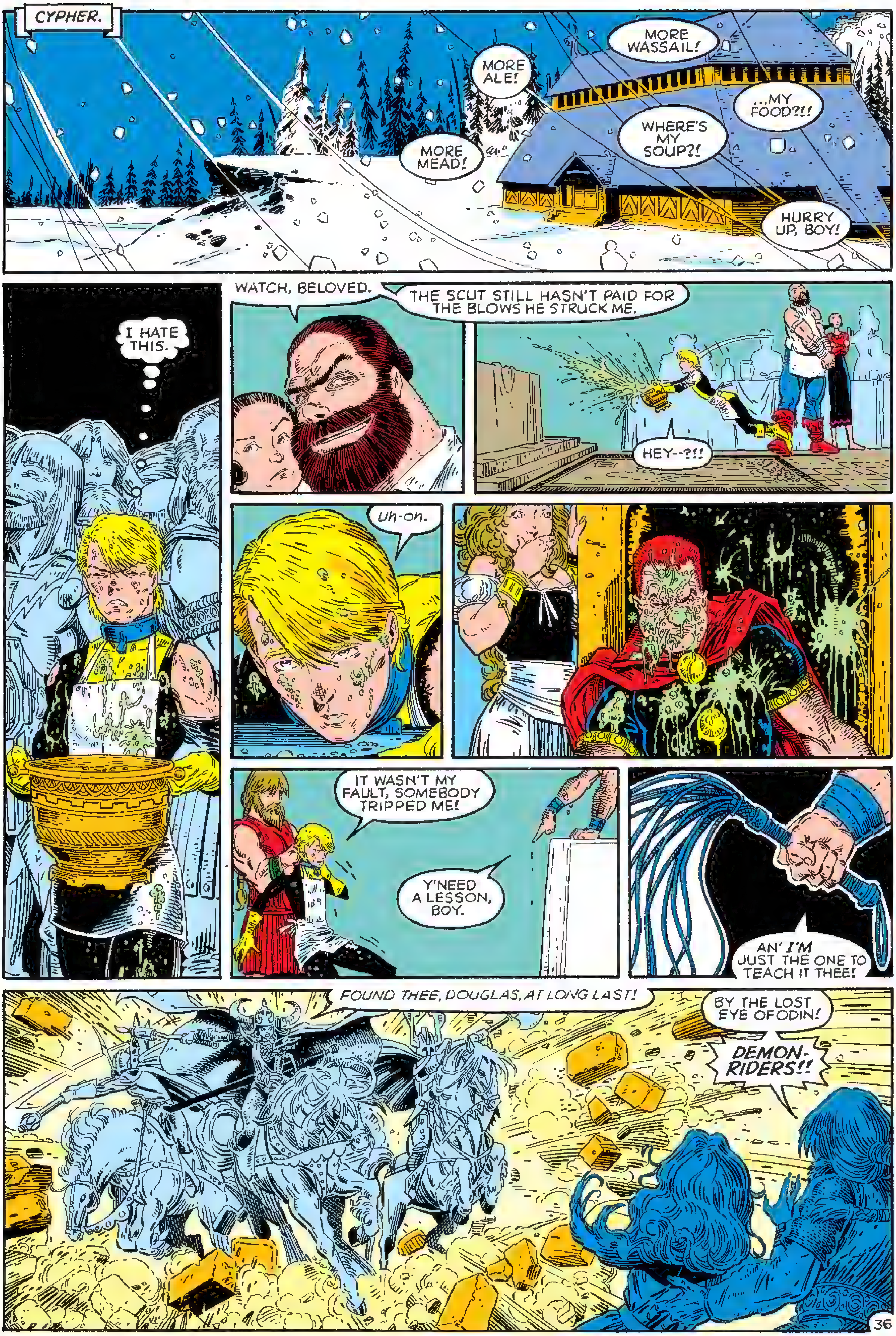

YOU DO NOT BELONG HERE, WARRIORS.
I DO NOT KNOW WHY YOU HAVE COME--
--NOR DO I CARE.
I SUGGEST YOU DEPART...
...WHILE YOU ARE ABLE.
THANKS FOR THE ASSIST. I FIGURED I WAS A GONER.
THOU ART A STRANGER.
Uh-huh--FROM EARTH. MY NAME'S ***DANI MOONSTAR.***
MIDGARD?!! THOU ART MORTAL BORN-- MOONSTAR, HAVE A CARE! THESE WINGED STALLIONS CAN BE DANGEROUS...
NOT THIS ONE. NOT TO ME.
I FEEL LIKE WE'VE KNOWN EACH OTHER ALL OUR LIVES.
I AM *MIST.* MY SISTERS AND I -- AND OUR HERD-- LIVE NEARBY...
...WOULDST THOU CARE TO JOIN US?
I'D LOVE TO!

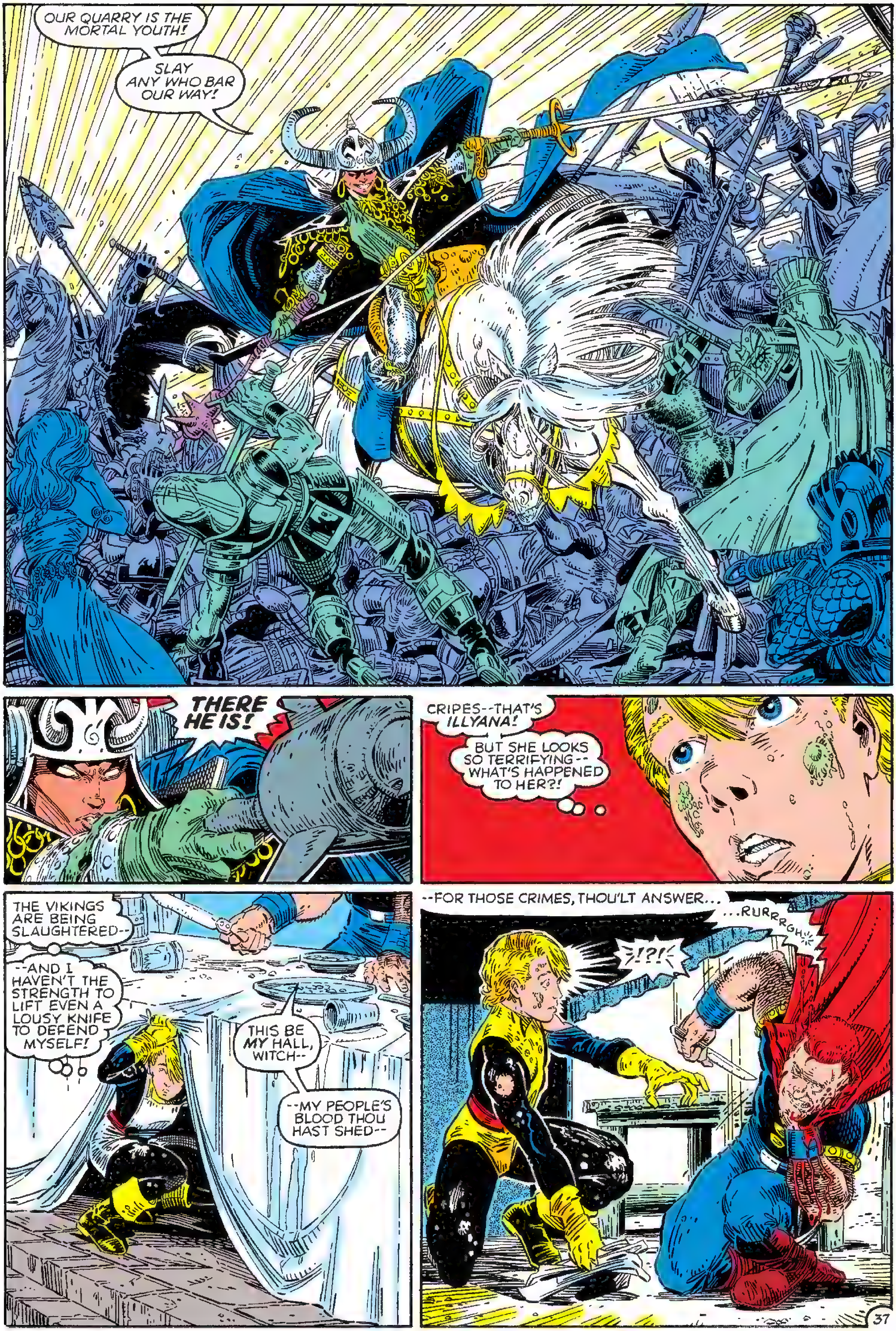

MAGIK.
I TRUST, LITTLE SORCERESS, MY WALL HATH KEPT THEE AMUSED?
WHAT DO YOU WANT WITH ME?
AMUSEMENT.
I WISH TO LEARN THINE ABILITIES...
...BY DEMONSTRATING AND EXERCISING *MINE*.
THIS GESTURE, FOR EXAMPLE...
...REDUCES THEE TO INFANCY.
WHILE THIS MAKES THEE THE MOST ANCIENT OF...
...CRONES--
--FASCINATING!
AN ORDINARY MORTAL WOULD HAVE BEEN REDUCED TO DUST, YET THOU REMAIN AS YOUNG AND VITAL AS EVER.
THERE'S MORE TO THEE, BRAT, THAN MEETS THE EYE.
I SENSE WITHIN THEE A KINDRED SOUL, A CAPACITY FOR WICKEDNESS THAT RIVALS MY OWN.
WHY RESIST IT--AND ME? WE COULD BE GREAT FRIENDS.
NOT A CHANCE.
PITY.
BEFORE I AM DONE, I SHALL KNOW ALL THY SECRETS. THOU SHALT SERVE ME, ILLYANA.
AND EVENTUALLY--LOVE ME.
NEVER!

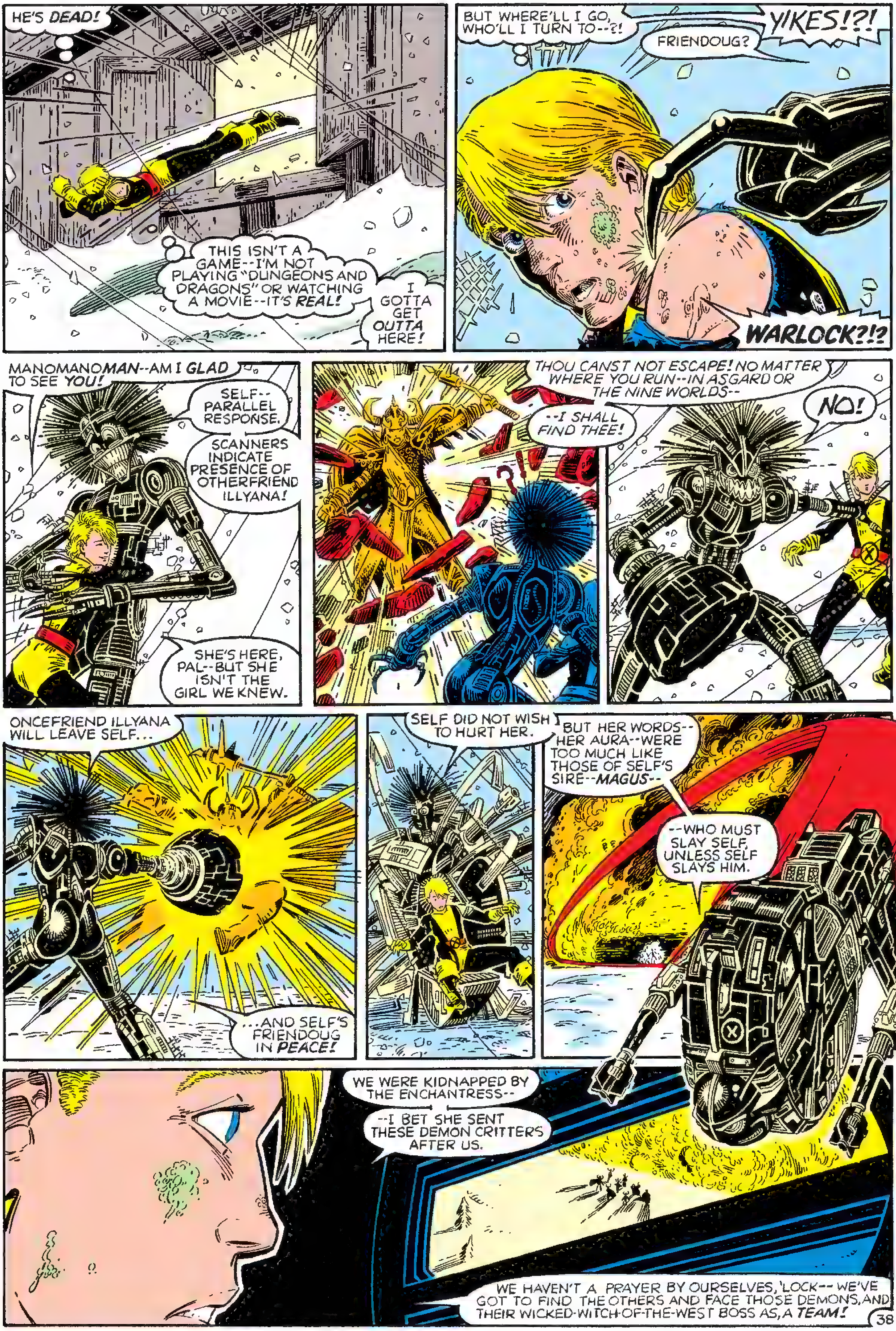

THY DEFIANCE IS BUT A WASTE OF BREATH.
FACE THE TRUTH...
...I OFFER NO MORE THAN THY *HEART'S DESIRE!*
No!
BEHOLD, CHILD, HOW EASILY I PULL FREE THE DARK SIDE OF THY SOUL...
...AND GIVE IT *PHYSICAL FORM!*
THIS MANIFESTATION OF EVIL SHALL LEAD MY *NIGHT-GAUNTS* IN PURSUIT OF THY FELLOWS.
WHETHER ON EARTH OR IN THE GOLDEN REALM, SHE SHALL FIND THEM--AND RETURN THEM TO ME.
THIS AVATAR POSSESSES ALL THY SORCEROUS MIGHT.
MOREOVER, THY LIFE FORCES ARE SO TIGHTLY BOUND...
...THAT ANY BLOW STRUCK AGAINST HER WILL INSTEAD REFLECT ITSELF ON THEE. SHE CANNOT BLEED, NOR FEEL PAIN, NOR BE BROKEN-- ALL THOSE ARE *THY* PRIVILEGE. AND BEST OF ALL, SINCE SHE CANNOT DIE, NEITHER CAN THEE.
IT WILL BE, I HOPE AND PRAY MY DEAR ONE, A TORMENT AS EXQUISITE...
...AS IT IS *ETERNAL.*

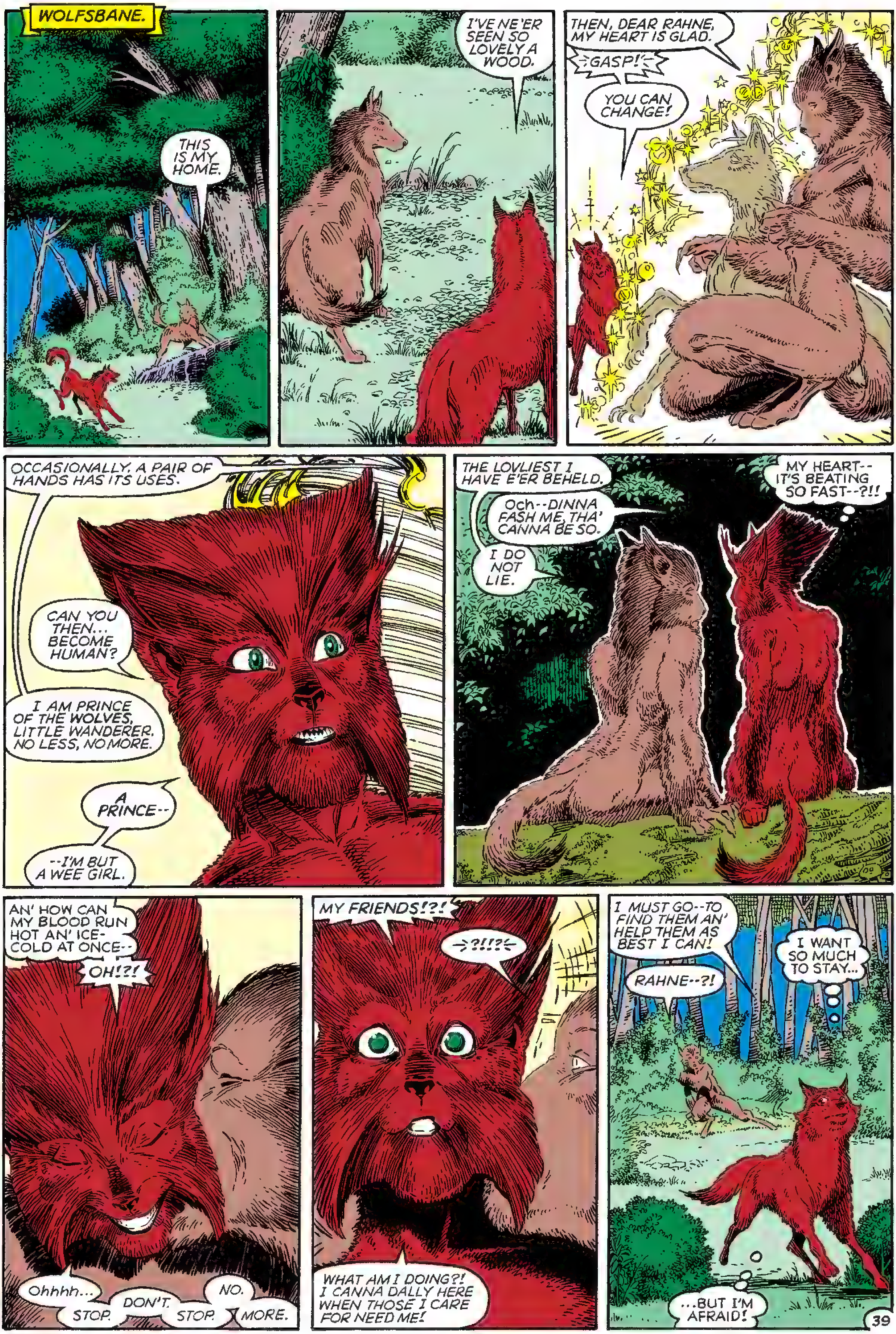

KARMA.
...NOT DEAD YET--?!!
WHY IS IT TAKING SO LONG?!
QU'EST-CE QUE C'EST-- WHAT IS THAT?!!
A VOICE?!? THEN-- I AM NOT ALONE IN THIS WILDERNESS!
SACRE COEUR!
SUCH THINGS CANNOT BE REAL--C'EST UNE HALLUCINATION-- I AM DREAMING! THE SUN HAS ADDLED MY BRAINS!
HELP ME!
THE SAND DEMON-- FOR THE LOVE OF FATHER ODIN--SAVE ME!!!
I CANNOT REFUSE THE CHILD-- BUT WHAT AM I TO DO?!
THIS BLOATED BODY IS OF NO USE-- BUT IF THAT CREATURE HAS A BRAIN, THEN PERHAPS WITH MY MUTANT POWER...
...I CAN POSSESS IT!

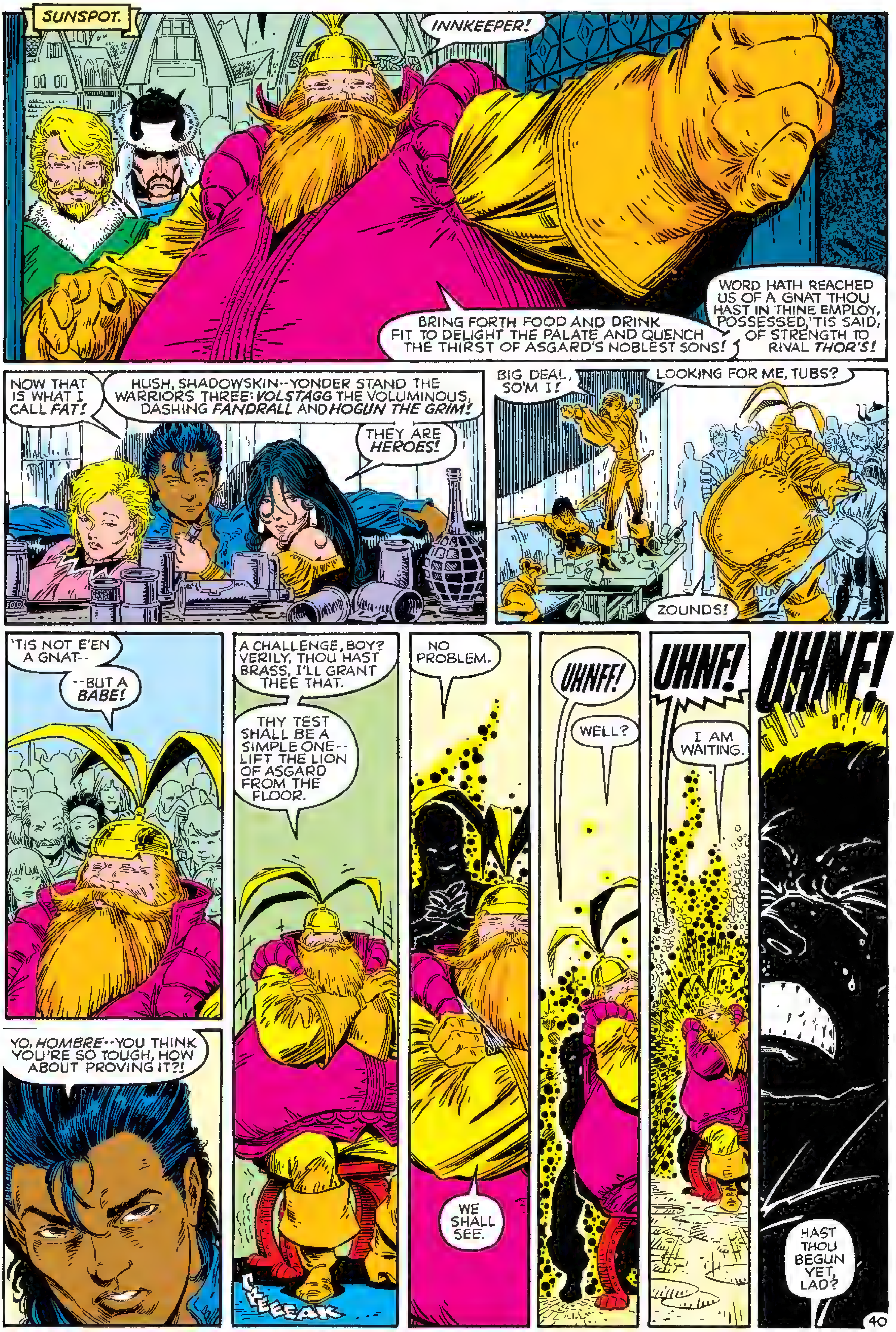

IT HAS A RUDIMENTARY CONSCIOUSNESS--
--PATHETICALLY TINY, CONSIDERING ITS BULK, LIKE THE GIANT DINOSAURS--
--BUT ENOUGH TO BE AWARE OF MY INTRUSION--
--AND --WHOUGH-- RESIST IT!
HEART...POUNDING...EXERTION OF...PSYCHIC STRUGGLE...TAKING...TOLL--MY BODY...NOT EQUAL TO...SUCH A TASK!
NON! I WILL NOT FALTER! I WILL NOT YIELD!
I WILL ENDURE!
...UNTIL I TRIUMPH!
I... DID IT. I DROVE THE BEAST AWAY!
THANK YOU THANK YOU THANK YOU THAT WAS THE BRAVEST MOST WONDERFUL THING I EVER SAW!
SWEET LITTLE THING--SHE REMINDS ME SO MUCH OF MY OWN BROTHER AND SISTER.
WHAT ARE YOU DOING HERE IN THIS DESERT, CHERIE?
I'M LOST. BUT NOW THAT I'VE FOUND A FRIEND, EVERYTHING WILL BE ALL RIGHT. YOU'LL PROTECT ME, WON'T YOU, AND TAKE ME HOME?
I...SHALL TRY.
SIN ENOUGH TO TAKE MY OWN LIFE, BUT I CANNOT ABANDON THIS INNOCENT. SHE HAS PLACED HER TRUST IN ME. I MUST DO WHAT I CAN FOR HER...
...NO MATTER HOW CERTAIN I AM THAT WE ARE BOTH OF US DOOMED.

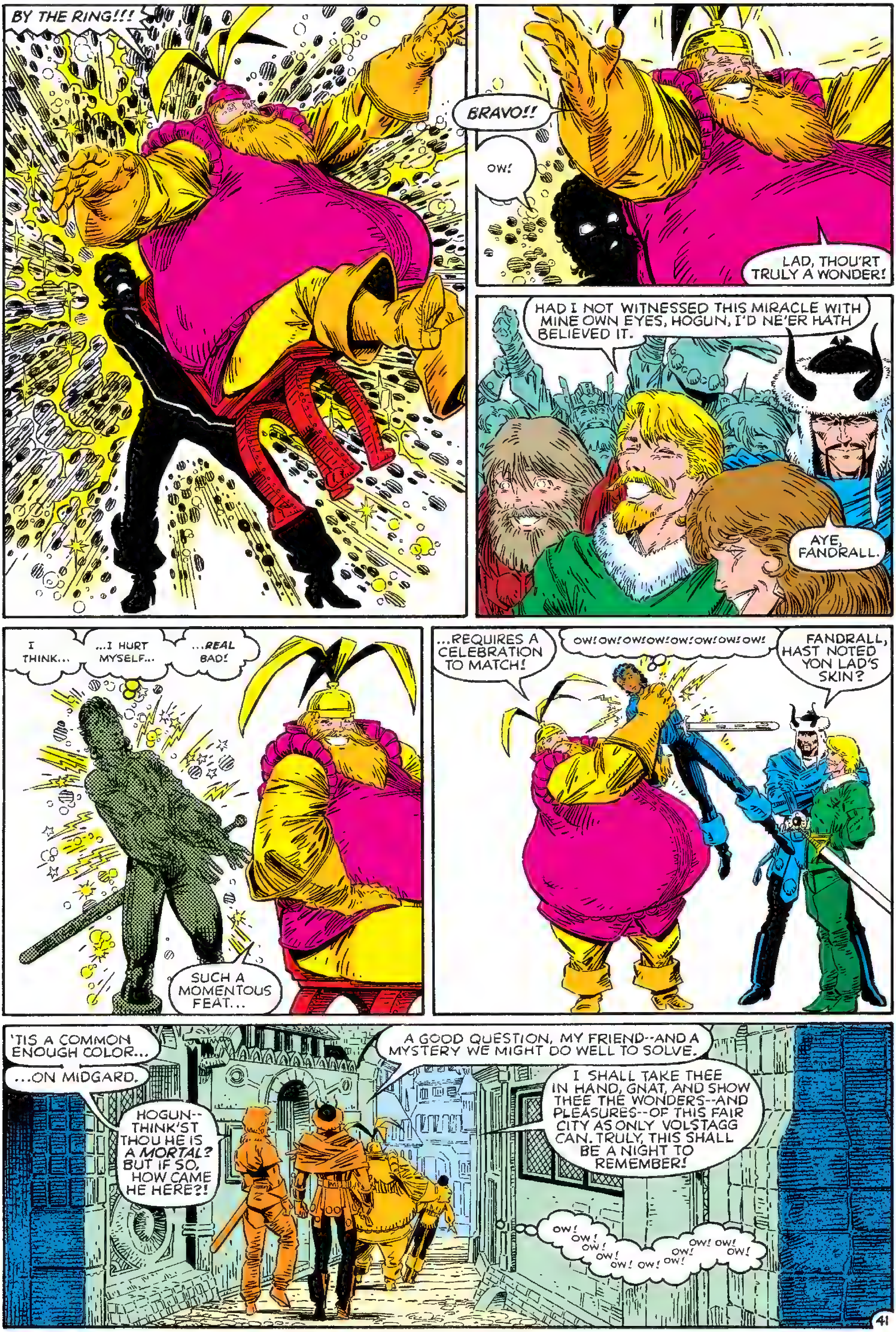

CYPHER.
MORE MEAD!
MORE ALE!
MORE WASSAIL!
WHERE'S MY SOUP?!
...MY FOOD?!!
HURRY UP, BOY!
I HATE THIS.
WATCH, BELOVED.
THE SCUT STILL HASN'T PAID FOR THE BLOWS HE STRUCK ME.
HEY--?!!
Uh-oh.
IT WASN'T MY FAULT, SOMEBODY TRIPPED ME!
Y'NEED A LESSON, BOY.
AN' I'M JUST THE ONE TO TEACH IT THEE!
FOUND THEE, DOUGLAS, AT LONG LAST!
BY THE LOST EYE OF ODIN!
DEMON-RIDERS!!

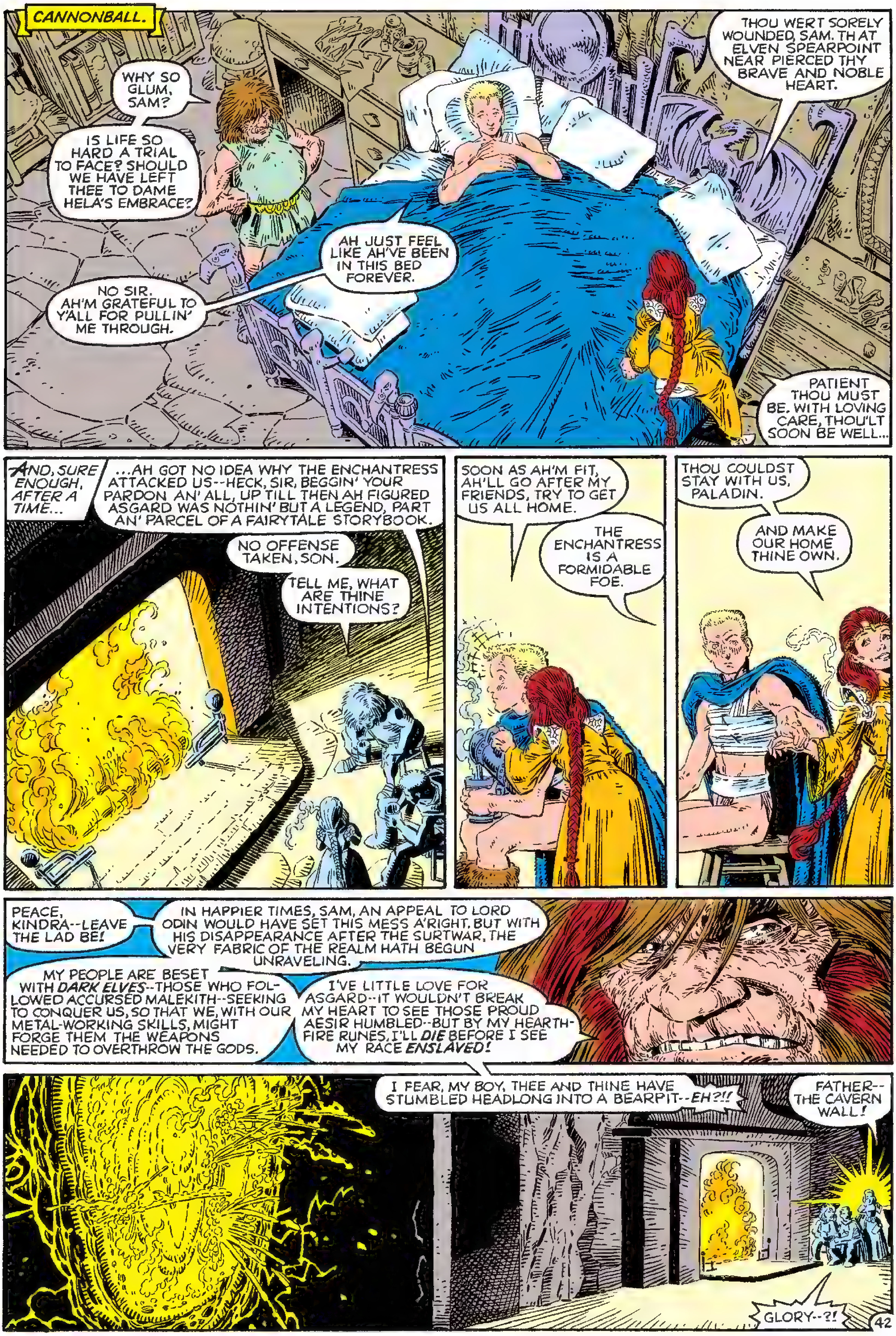

OUR QUARRY IS THE MORTAL YOUTH!
SLAY ANY WHO BAR OUR WAY!
THERE HE IS!
CRIPES--THAT'S *ILLYANA!*
BUT SHE LOOKS SO TERRIFYING--WHAT'S HAPPENED TO HER?!
THE VIKINGS ARE BEING SLAUGHTERED--
--AND I HAVEN'T THE STRENGTH TO LIFT EVEN A LOUSY KNIFE TO DEFEND MYSELF!
THIS BE *MY* HALL, WITCH--
--MY PEOPLE'S BLOOD THOU HAST SHED--
--FOR THOSE CRIMES, THOU'LT ANSWER...
...RURRRGH!
!?!

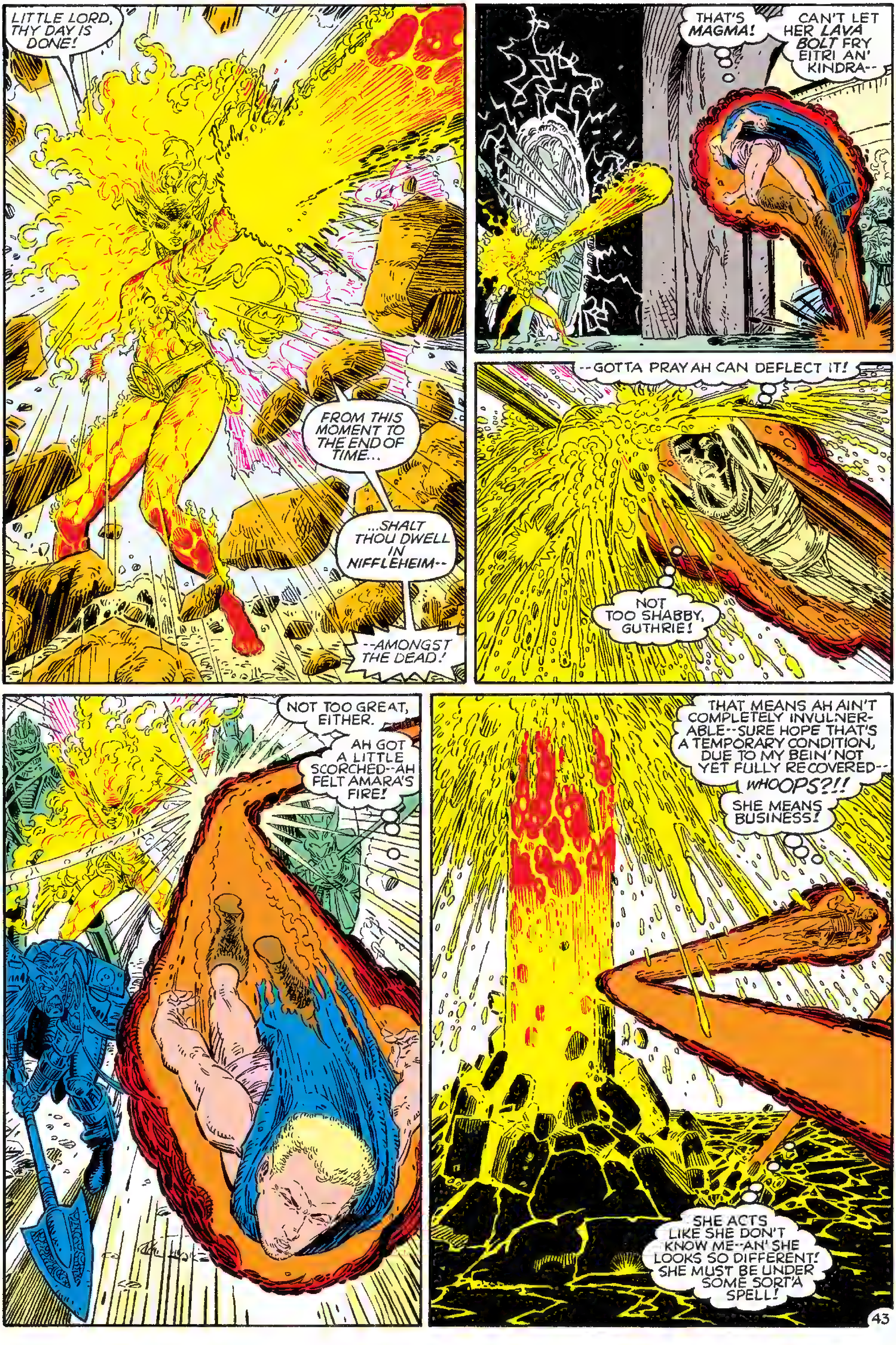

HE'S *DEAD!*
THIS ISN'T A GAME--I'M NOT PLAYING "DUNGEONS AND DRAGONS" OR WATCHING A MOVIE--IT'S *REAL!*
I GOTTA GET OUTTA HERE!
BUT WHERE'LL I GO, WHO'LL I TURN TO--?!
FRIENDOUG?
YIKES!?!
WARLOCK?!?
MANOMANOMAN--AM I *GLAD* TO SEE *YOU!*
SELF--PARALLEL RESPONSE.
SCANNERS INDICATE PRESENCE OF OTHERFRIEND ILLYANA!
SHE'S HERE, PAL--BUT SHE ISN'T THE GIRL WE KNEW.
THOU CANST NOT ESCAPE! NO MATTER WHERE YOU RUN--IN ASGARD OR THE NINE WORLDS--
--I SHALL FIND THEE!
?!
NO!
ONCEFRIEND ILLYANA WILL LEAVE SELF...
...AND SELF'S FRIENDOUG IN *PEACE!*
SELF DID NOT WISH TO HURT HER.
BUT HER WORDS--HER AURA--WERE TOO MUCH LIKE THOSE OF SELF'S SIRE--*MAGUS*--
--WHO MUST SLAY SELF, UNLESS SELF SLAYS HIM.
WE WERE KIDNAPPED BY THE ENCHANTRESS--
--I BET SHE SENT THESE DEMON CRITTERS AFTER US.
WE HAVEN'T A PRAYER BY OURSELVES, 'LOCK-- WE'VE GOT TO FIND THE OTHERS AND FACE THOSE DEMONS, AND THEIR WICKED-WITCH-OF-THE-WEST BOSS AS, A *TEAM!*

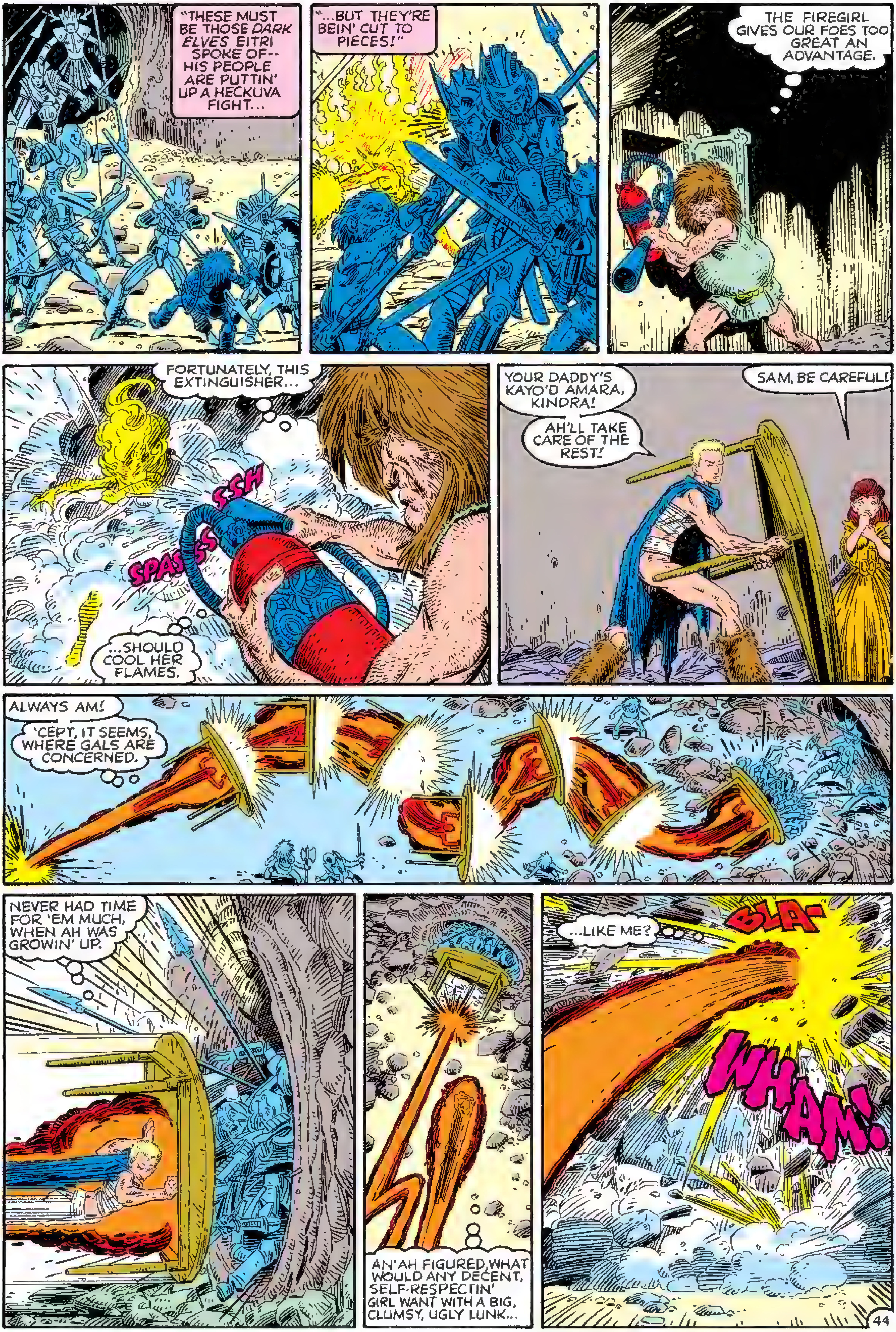

WOLFSBANE.
THIS IS MY HOME.
I'VE NE'ER SEEN SO LOVELY A WOOD.
THEN, DEAR RAHNE, MY HEART IS GLAD.
GASP!
YOU CAN CHANGE!
OCCASIONALLY, A PAIR OF HANDS HAS ITS USES.
CAN YOU THEN... BECOME HUMAN?
I AM PRINCE OF THE WOLVES, LITTLE WANDERER. NO LESS, NO MORE.
A PRINCE--
--I'M BUT A WEE GIRL.
THE LOVLIEST I HAVE E'ER BEHELD.
Och--DINNA FASH ME, THA' CANNA BE SO.
I DO NOT LIE.
MY HEART--IT'S BEATING SO FAST--?!!
AN' HOW CAN MY BLOOD RUN HOT AN' ICE-COLD AT ONCE--
OH!?!
Ohhhh...
STOP.
DON'T.
STOP.
NO.
MORE.
MY FRIENDS!?!
?!!?
WHAT AM I DOING?! I CANNA DALLY HERE WHEN THOSE I CARE FOR NEED ME!
I MUST GO--TO FIND THEM AN' HELP THEM AS BEST I CAN!
RAHNE--?!
I WANT SO MUCH TO STAY...
...BUT I'M AFRAID!

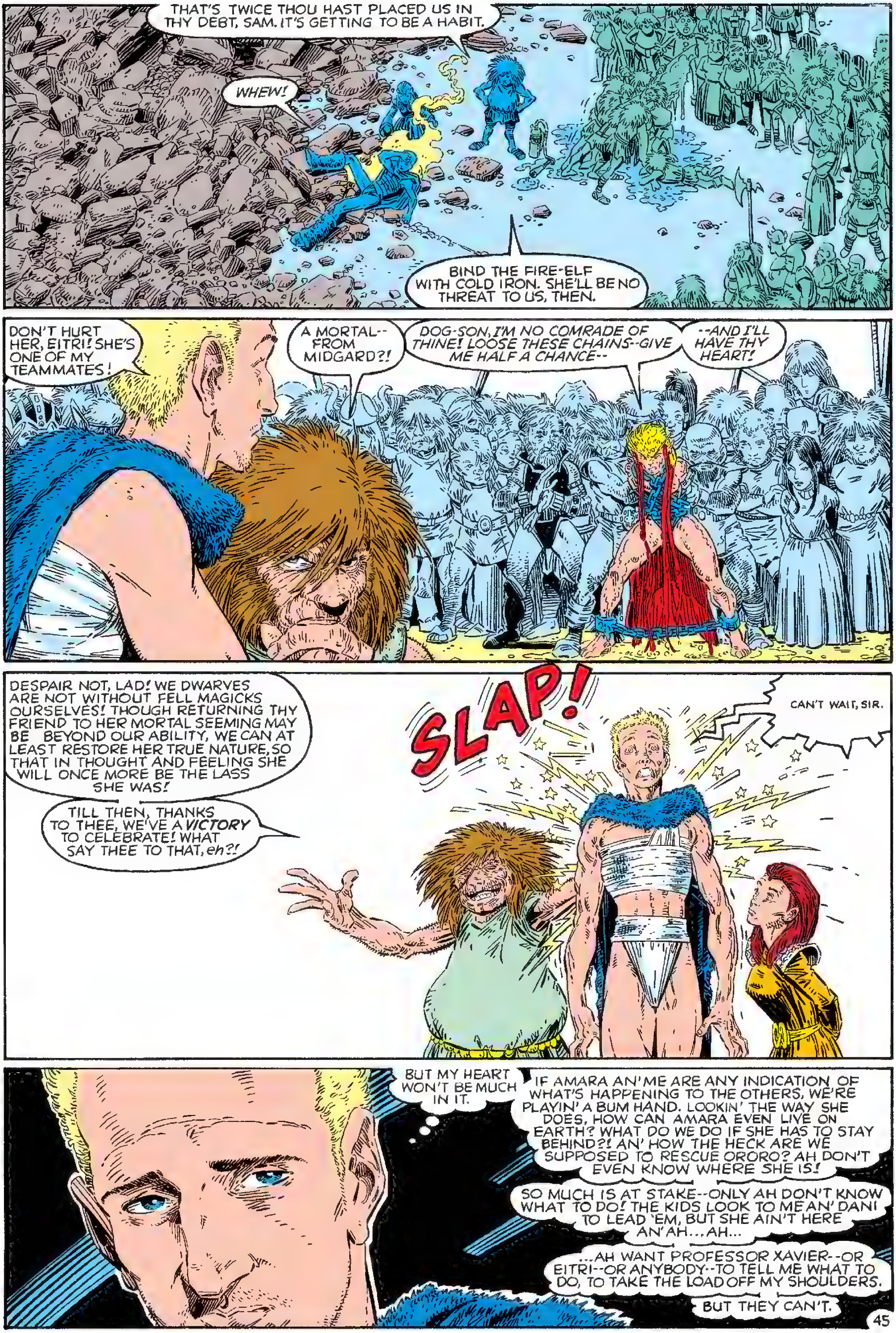

SUNSPOT.
INNKEEPER!
BRING FORTH FOOD AND DRINK FIT TO DELIGHT THE PALATE AND QUENCH THE THIRST OF ASGARD'S NOBLEST SONS!
WORD HATH REACHED US OF A GNAT THOU HAST IN THINE EMPLOY, POSSESSED, 'TIS SAID, OF STRENGTH TO RIVAL *THOR'S!*
NOW THAT IS WHAT I CALL *FAT!*
HUSH, SHADOWSKIN--YONDER STAND THE WARRIORS THREE: *VOLSTAGG* THE VOLUMINOUS, DASHING *FANDRALL* AND *HOGUN THE GRIM!*
THEY ARE *HEROES!*
BIG DEAL, SO'M I!
LOOKING FOR ME, TUBS?
ZOUNDS!
'TIS NOT E'EN A GNAT--
--BUT A *BABE!*
YO, *HOMBRE*--YOU THINK YOU'RE SO TOUGH, HOW ABOUT PROVING IT?!
A CHALLENGE, BOY? VERILY, THOU HAST BRASS, I'LL GRANT THEE THAT.
THY TEST SHALL BE A SIMPLE ONE--LIFT THE LION OF ASGARD FROM THE FLOOR.
CREEEAK
NO PROBLEM.
WE SHALL SEE.
UHNFF!
WELL?
UHNF!
I AM WAITING.
UHNF!
HAST THOU BEGUN YET, LAD?

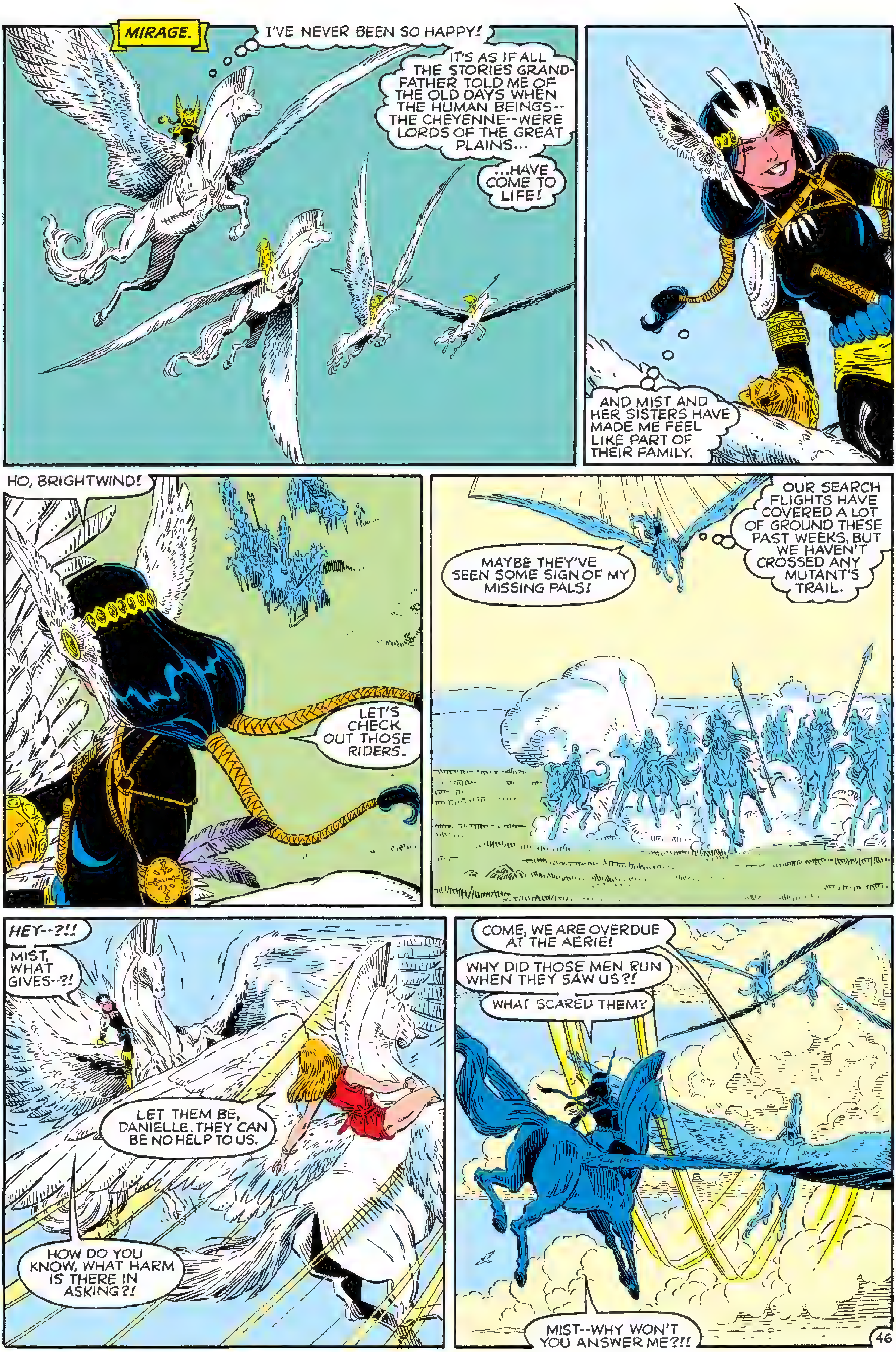

BY THE RING!!!
BRAVO!!
OW!
LAD, THOU'RT TRULY A WONDER!
HAD I NOT WITNESSED THIS MIRACLE WITH MINE OWN EYES, HOGUN, I'D NE'ER HATH BELIEVED IT.
AYE, FANDRALL.
I THINK...
...I HURT MYSELF...
...REAL BAD!
SUCH A MOMENTOUS FEAT...
...REQUIRES A CELEBRATION TO MATCH!
OW! OW! OW! OW! OW! OW! OW! OW!
FANDRALL, HAST NOTED YON LAD'S SKIN?
'TIS A COMMON ENOUGH COLOR...
...ON MIDGARD.
HOGUN-- THINK'ST THOU HE IS A MORTAL? BUT IF SO, HOW CAME HE HERE?!
A GOOD QUESTION, MY FRIEND--AND A MYSTERY WE MIGHT DO WELL TO SOLVE.
I SHALL TAKE THEE IN HAND, GNAT, AND SHOW THEE THE WONDERS--AND PLEASURES--OF THIS FAIR CITY AS ONLY VOLSTAGG CAN. TRULY, THIS SHALL BE A NIGHT TO REMEMBER!
OW! OW! OW! OW! OW! OW! OW! OW! OW! OW! OW!

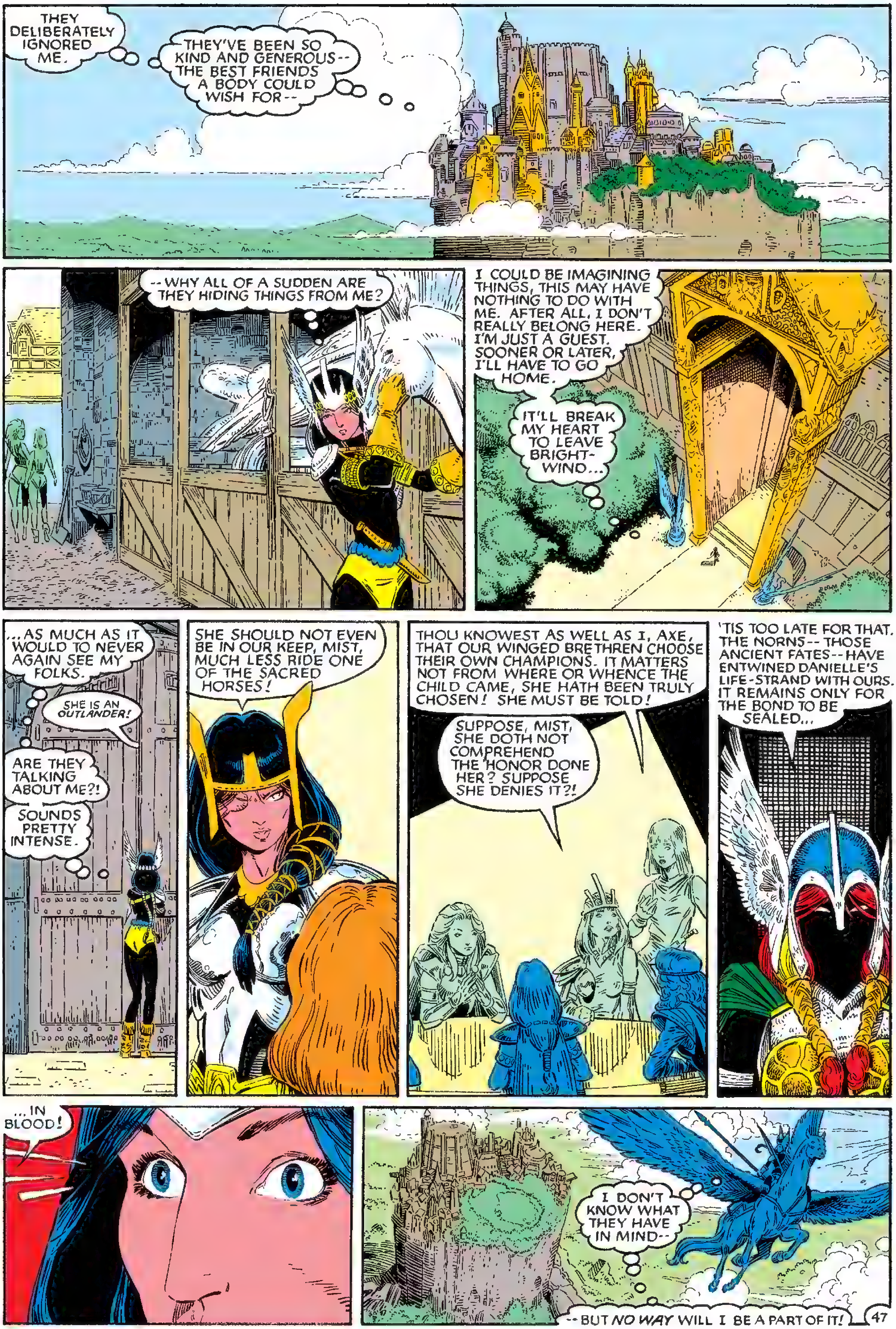

CANNONBALL.
WHY SO GLUM, SAM?
IS LIFE SO HARD A TRIAL TO FACE? SHOULD WE HAVE LEFT THEE TO DAME HELA'S EMBRACE?
AH JUST FEEL LIKE AH'VE BEEN IN THIS BED FOREVER.
NO SIR. AH'M GRATEFUL TO Y'ALL FOR PULLIN' ME THROUGH.
THOU WERT SORELY WOUNDED, SAM. THAT ELVEN SPEARPOINT NEAR PIERCED THY BRAVE AND NOBLE HEART.
PATIENT THOU MUST BE. WITH LOVING CARE, THOU'LT SOON BE WELL...
AND, SURE ENOUGH, AFTER A TIME...
...AH GOT NO IDEA WHY THE ENCHANTRESS ATTACKED US--HECK, SIR, BEGGIN' YOUR PARDON AN' ALL, UP TILL THEN AH FIGURED ASGARD WAS NOTHIN' BUT A LEGEND, PART AN' PARCEL OF A FAIRYTALE STORYBOOK.
NO OFFENSE TAKEN, SON.
TELL ME, WHAT ARE THINE INTENTIONS?
SOON AS AH'M FIT, AH'LL GO AFTER MY FRIENDS, TRY TO GET US ALL HOME.
THE ENCHANTRESS IS A FORMIDABLE FOE.
THOU COULDST STAY WITH US, PALADIN.
AND MAKE OUR HOME THINE OWN.
PEACE, KINDRA--LEAVE THE LAD BE!
IN HAPPIER TIMES, SAM, AN APPEAL TO LORD ODIN WOULD HAVE SET THIS MESS A'RIGHT. BUT WITH HIS DISAPPEARANCE AFTER THE SURTWAR, THE VERY FABRIC OF THE REALM HATH BEGUN UNRAVELING.
MY PEOPLE ARE BESET WITH DARK ELVES--THOSE WHO FOLLOWED ACCURSED MALEKITH--SEEKING TO CONQUER US, SO THAT WE, WITH OUR METAL-WORKING SKILLS, MIGHT FORGE THEM THE WEAPONS NEEDED TO OVERTHROW THE GODS.
I'VE LITTLE LOVE FOR ASGARD--IT WOULDN'T BREAK MY HEART TO SEE THOSE PROUD AESIR HUMBLED--BUT BY MY HEARTH-FIRE RUNES, I'LL DIE BEFORE I SEE MY RACE ENSLAVED!
I FEAR, MY BOY, THEE AND THINE HAVE STUMBLED HEADLONG INTO A BEARPIT--EH?!!
FATHER--THE CAVERN WALL!
GLORY--?!

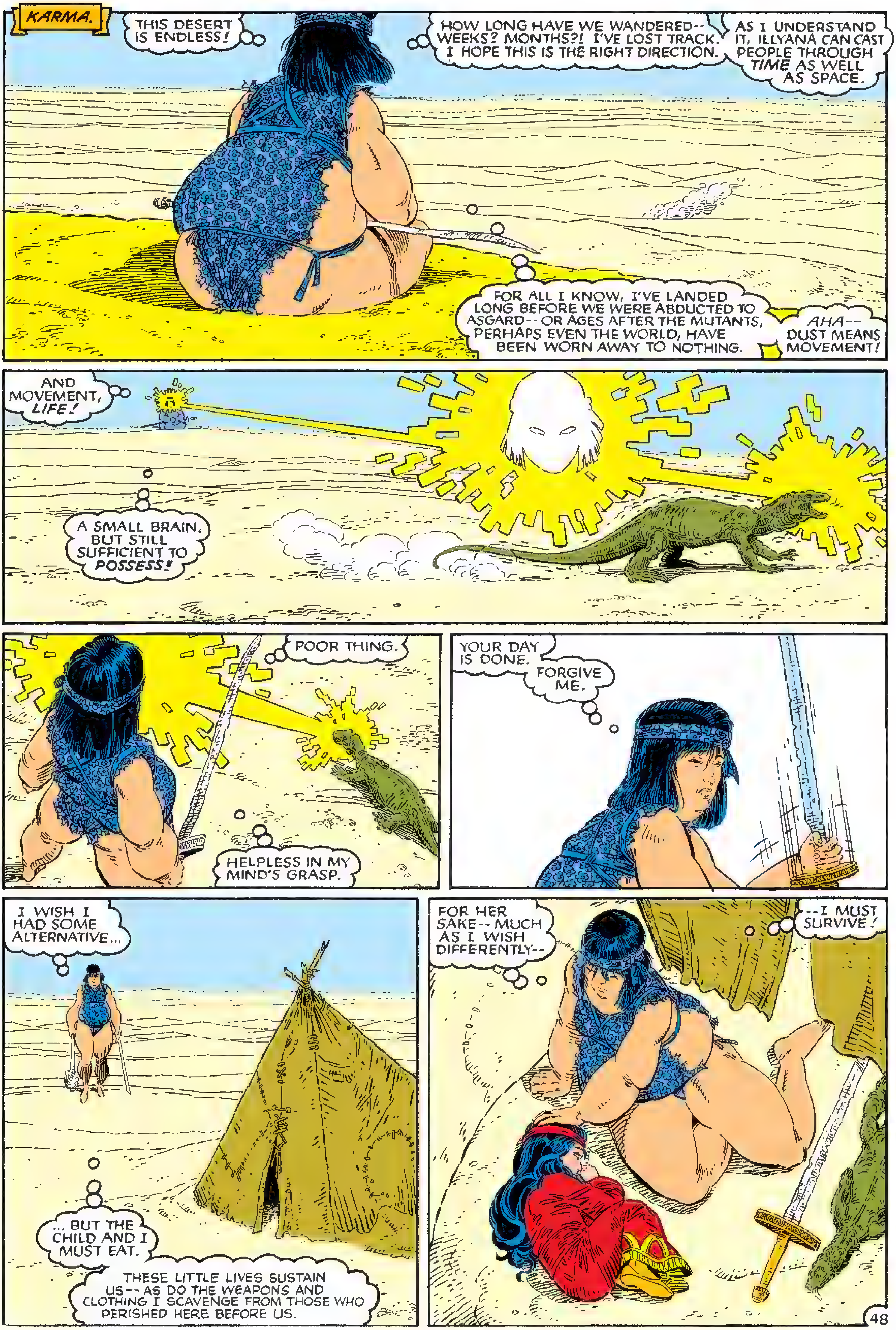

LITTLE LORD, THY DAY IS DONE!
FROM THIS MOMENT TO THE END OF TIME...
...SHALT THOU DWELL IN NIFFLEHEIM--
--AMONGST THE DEAD!
THAT'S MAGMA!
CAN'T LET HER LAVA BOLT FRY EITRI AN' KINDRA--
--GOTTA PRAY AH CAN DEFLECT IT!
NOT TOO SHABBY, GUTHRIE!
NOT TOO GREAT, EITHER.
AH GOT A LITTLE SCORCHED--AH FELT AMARA'S FIRE!
THAT MEANS AH AIN'T COMPLETELY INVULNERABLE--SURE HOPE THAT'S A TEMPORARY CONDITION, DUE TO MY BEIN' NOT YET FULLY RECOVERED--
WHOOPS?!!
SHE MEANS BUSINESS!
SHE ACTS LIKE SHE DON'T KNOW ME--AN' SHE LOOKS SO DIFFERENT! SHE MUST BE UNDER SOME SORT'A SPELL!

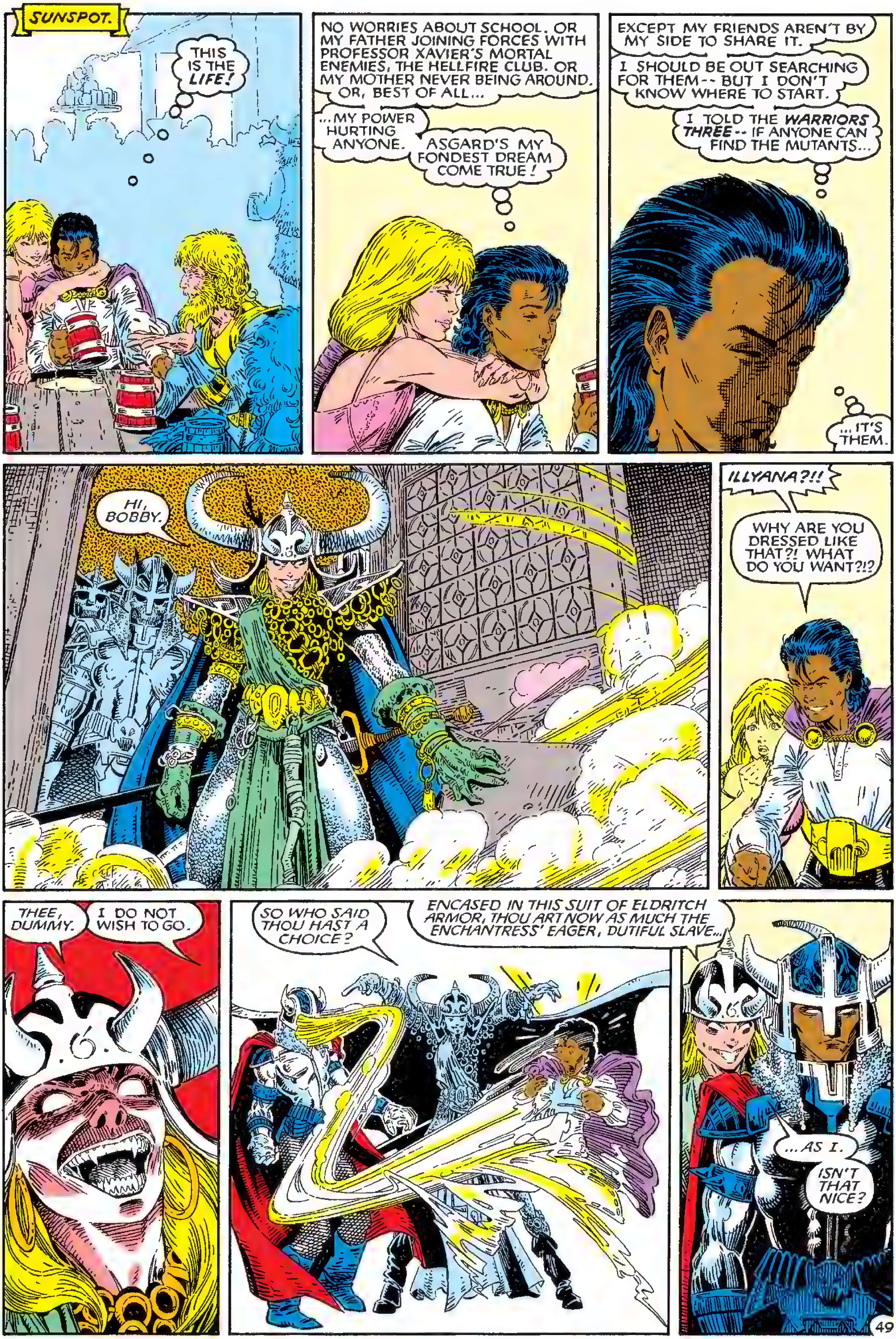

"THESE MUST BE THOSE *DARK ELVES* EITRI SPOKE OF-- HIS PEOPLE ARE PUTTIN' UP A HECKUVA FIGHT...
"...BUT THEY'RE BEIN' CUT TO PIECES!"
THE FIREGIRL GIVES OUR FOES TOO GREAT AN ADVANTAGE.
FORTUNATELY, THIS EXTINGUISHER...
SSH
SPASSSS
...SHOULD COOL HER FLAMES.
YOUR DADDY'S KAYO'D AMARA, KINDRA!
AH'LL TAKE CARE OF THE REST!
SAM, BE CAREFUL!
ALWAYS AM!
'CEPT, IT SEEMS, WHERE GALS ARE CONCERNED.
NEVER HAD TIME FOR 'EM MUCH, WHEN AH WAS GROWIN' UP.
AN'AH FIGURED, WHAT WOULD ANY DECENT, SELF-RESPECTIN' GIRL WANT WITH A BIG, CLUMSY, UGLY LUNK...
...LIKE ME?
BLA-
WHAM!

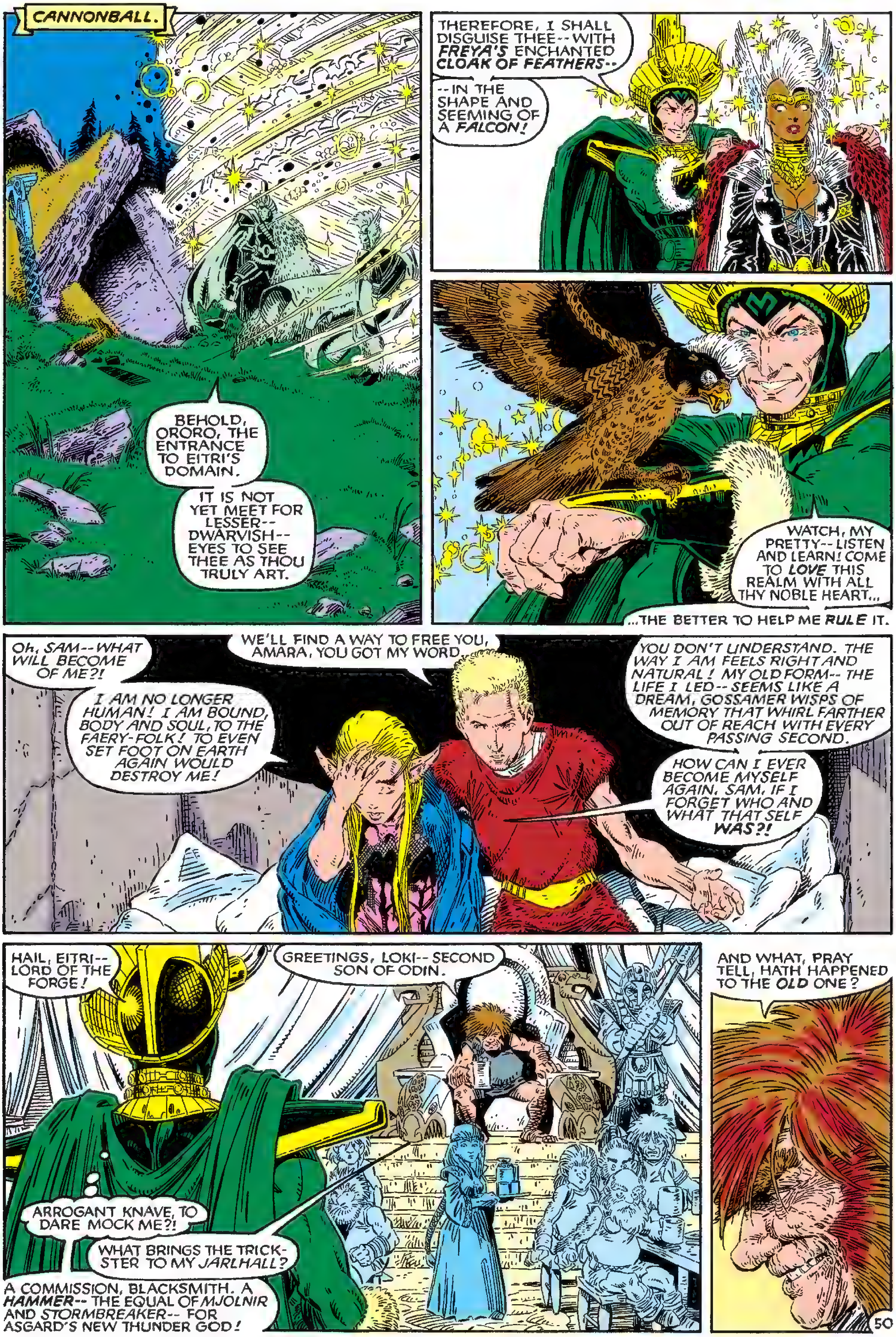

THAT'S TWICE THOU HAST PLACED US IN THY DEBT, SAM. IT'S GETTING TO BE A HABIT.
WHEW!
BIND THE FIRE-ELF WITH COLD IRON. SHE'LL BE NO THREAT TO US, THEN.
DON'T HURT HER, EITRI! SHE'S ONE OF MY TEAMMATES!
A MORTAL-- FROM MIDGARD?!
DOG-SON, I'M NO COMRADE OF THINE! LOOSE THESE CHAINS--GIVE ME HALF A CHANCE--
--AND I'LL HAVE THY HEART!
DESPAIR NOT, LAD! WE DWARVES ARE NOT WITHOUT FELL MAGICKS OURSELVES! THOUGH RETURNING THY FRIEND TO HER MORTAL SEEMING MAY BE BEYOND OUR ABILITY, WE CAN AT LEAST RESTORE HER TRUE NATURE, SO THAT IN THOUGHT AND FEELING SHE WILL ONCE MORE BE THE LASS SHE WAS!
TILL THEN, THANKS TO THEE, WE'VE A VICTORY TO CELEBRATE! WHAT SAY THEE TO THAT, eh?!
SLAP!
CAN'T WAIT, SIR.
BUT MY HEART WON'T BE MUCH IN IT.
IF AMARA AN' ME ARE ANY INDICATION OF WHAT'S HAPPENING TO THE OTHERS, WE'RE PLAYIN' A BUM HAND. LOOKIN' THE WAY SHE DOES, HOW CAN AMARA EVEN LIVE ON EARTH? WHAT DO WE DO IF SHE HAS TO STAY BEHIND?! AN' HOW THE HECK ARE WE SUPPOSED TO RESCUE ORORO? AH DON'T EVEN KNOW WHERE SHE IS!
SO MUCH IS AT STAKE--ONLY AH DON'T KNOW WHAT TO DO! THE KIDS LOOK TO ME AN' DANI TO LEAD 'EM, BUT SHE AIN'T HERE AN' AH... AH...
...AH WANT PROFESSOR XAVIER--OR EITRI--OR ANYBODY--TO TELL ME WHAT TO DO, TO TAKE THE LOAD OFF MY SHOULDERS.
BUT THEY CAN'T.

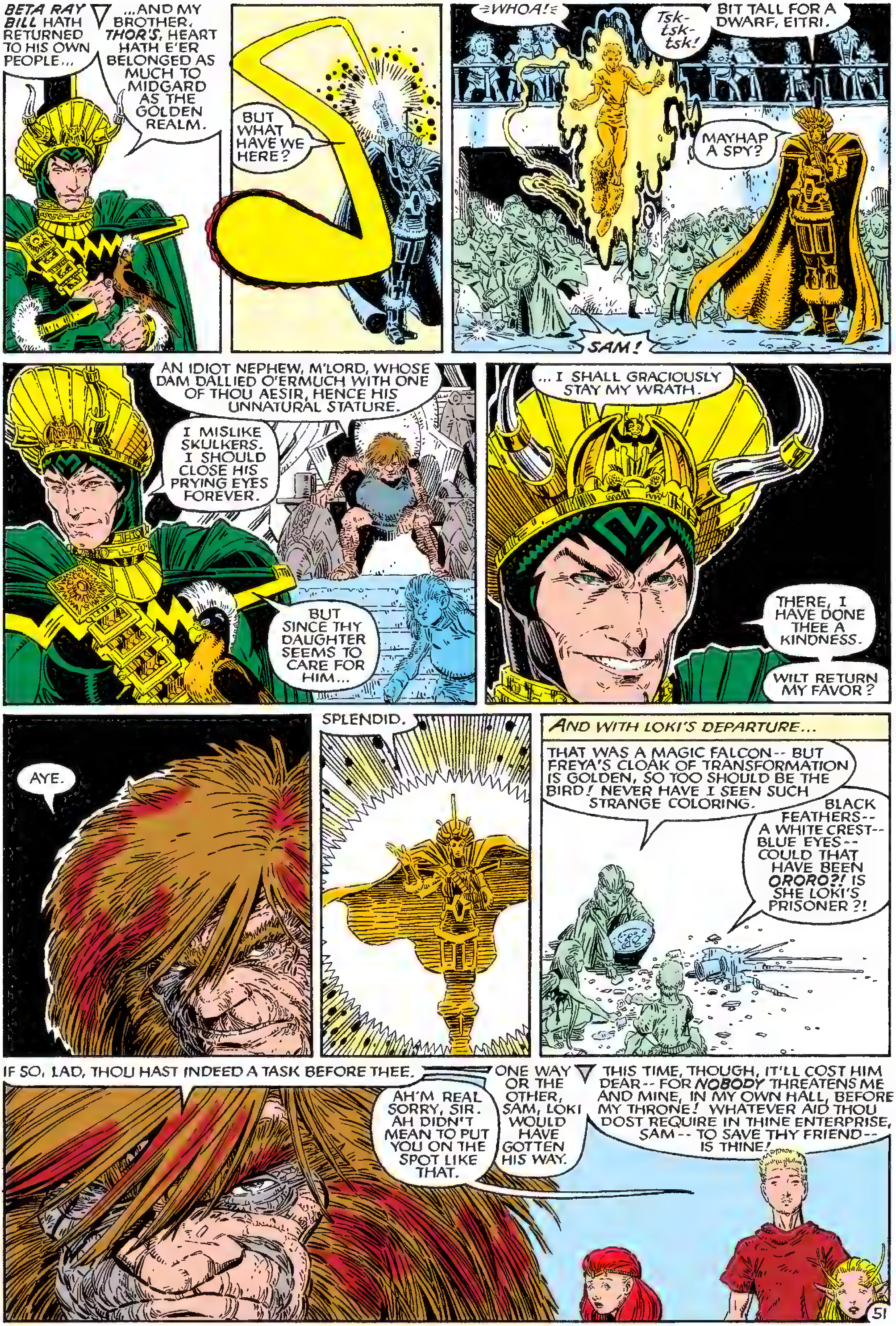

MIRAGE.
I'VE NEVER BEEN SO HAPPY!
IT'S AS IF ALL THE STORIES GRANDFATHER TOLD ME OF THE OLD DAYS WHEN THE HUMAN BEINGS--THE CHEYENNE--WERE LORDS OF THE GREAT PLAINS...
...HAVE COME TO LIFE!
AND MIST AND HER SISTERS HAVE MADE ME FEEL LIKE PART OF THEIR FAMILY.
HO, BRIGHTWIND!
LET'S CHECK OUT THOSE RIDERS.
OUR SEARCH FLIGHTS HAVE COVERED A LOT OF GROUND THESE PAST WEEKS, BUT WE HAVEN'T CROSSED ANY MUTANT'S TRAIL.
MAYBE THEY'VE SEEN SOME SIGN OF MY MISSING PALS!
HEY--?!!
MIST, WHAT GIVES--?!
LET THEM BE, DANIELLE. THEY CAN BE NO HELP TO US.
HOW DO YOU KNOW, WHAT HARM IS THERE IN ASKING?!
COME, WE ARE OVERDUE AT THE AERIE!
WHY DID THOSE MEN RUN WHEN THEY SAW US?!
WHAT SCARED THEM?
MIST--WHY WON'T YOU ANSWER ME?!!

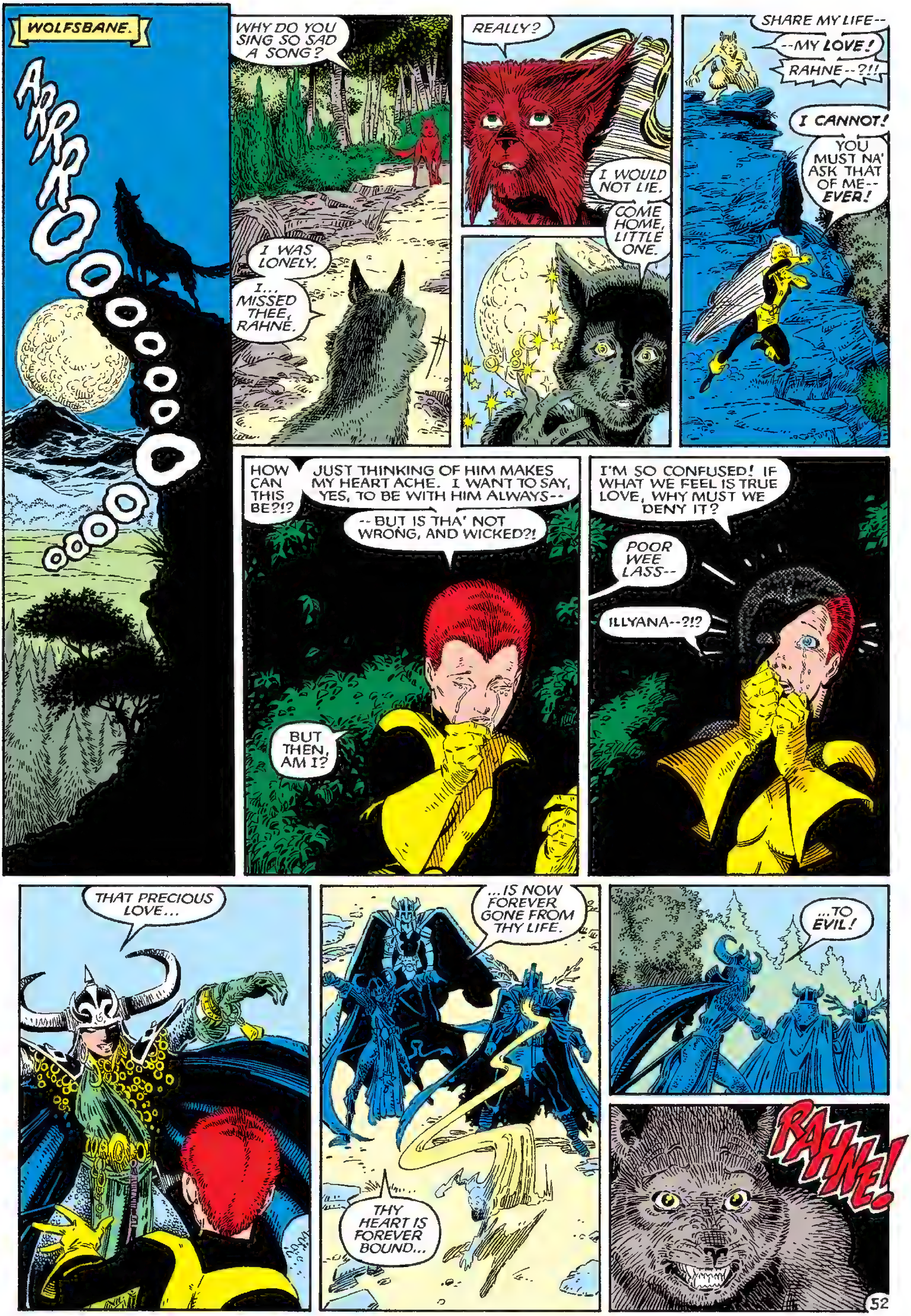

THEY DELIBERATELY IGNORED ME.
THEY'VE BEEN SO KIND AND GENEROUS -- THE BEST FRIENDS A BODY COULD WISH FOR --
-- WHY ALL OF A SUDDEN ARE THEY HIDING THINGS FROM ME?
I COULD BE IMAGINING THINGS, THIS MAY HAVE NOTHING TO DO WITH ME. AFTER ALL, I DON'T REALLY BELONG HERE. I'M JUST A GUEST. SOONER OR LATER, I'LL HAVE TO GO HOME.
IT'LL BREAK MY HEART TO LEAVE BRIGHTWIND...
...AS MUCH AS IT WOULD TO NEVER AGAIN SEE MY FOLKS.
SHE IS AN OUTLANDER!
ARE THEY TALKING ABOUT ME?!
SOUNDS PRETTY INTENSE.
SHE SHOULD NOT EVEN BE IN OUR KEEP, MIST, MUCH LESS RIDE ONE OF THE SACRED HORSES!
THOU KNOWEST AS WELL AS I, AXE, THAT OUR WINGED BRETHREN CHOOSE THEIR OWN CHAMPIONS. IT MATTERS NOT FROM WHERE OR WHENCE THE CHILD CAME, SHE HATH BEEN TRULY CHOSEN! SHE MUST BE TOLD!
SUPPOSE, MIST, SHE DOTH NOT COMPREHEND THE HONOR DONE HER? SUPPOSE SHE DENIES IT?!
'TIS TOO LATE FOR THAT. THE NORNS -- THOSE ANCIENT FATES -- HAVE ENTWINED DANIELLE'S LIFE-STRAND WITH OURS. IT REMAINS ONLY FOR THE BOND TO BE SEALED...
...IN BLOOD!
I DON'T KNOW WHAT THEY HAVE IN MIND --
-- BUT NO WAY WILL I BE A PART OF IT!

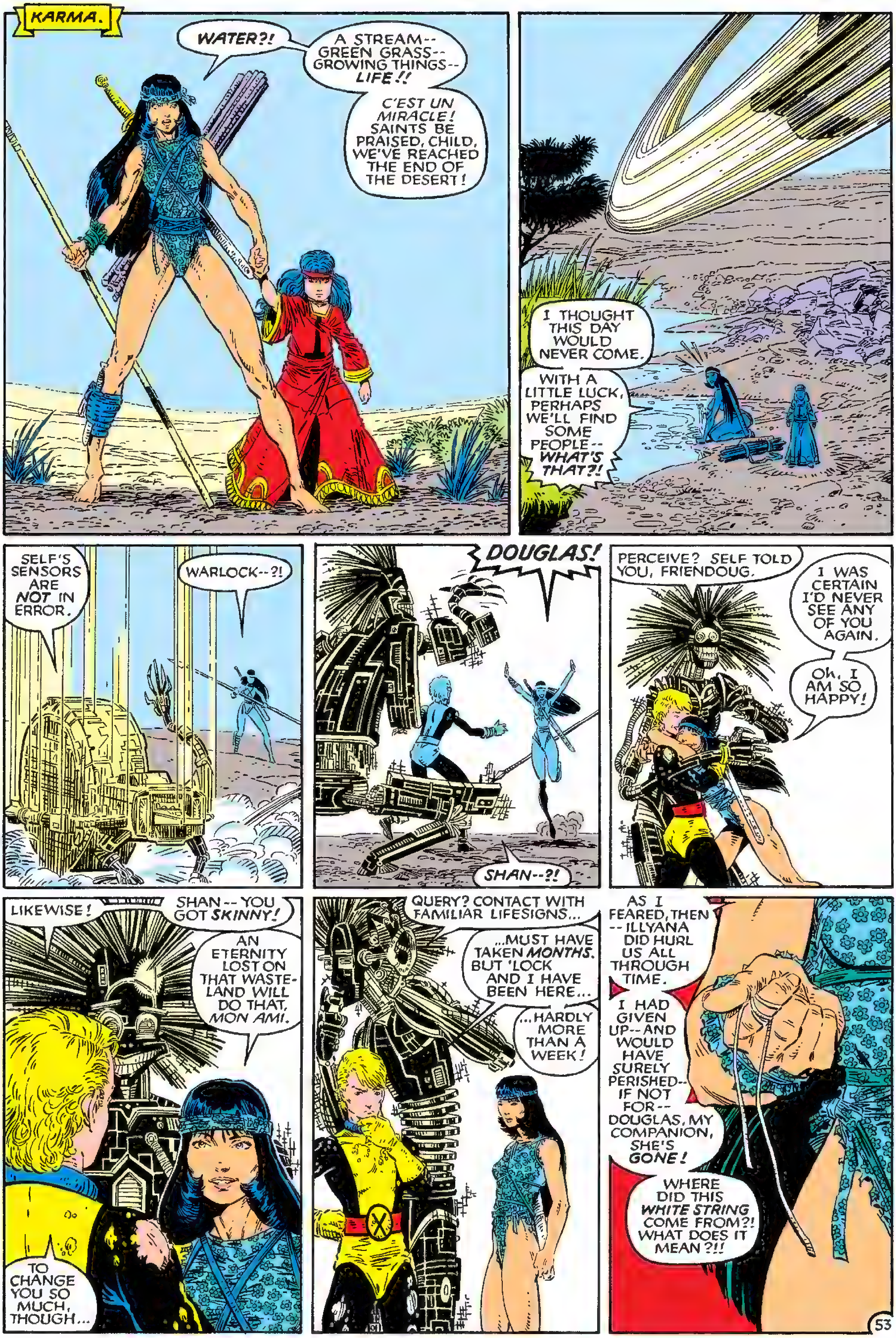

KARMA.
THIS DESERT IS ENDLESS!
HOW LONG HAVE WE WANDERED-- WEEKS? MONTHS?! I'VE LOST TRACK. I HOPE THIS IS THE RIGHT DIRECTION.
AS I UNDERSTAND IT, ILLYANA CAN CAST PEOPLE THROUGH *TIME* AS WELL AS SPACE.
FOR ALL I KNOW, I'VE LANDED LONG BEFORE WE WERE ABDUCTED TO ASGARD--OR AGES AFTER THE MUTANTS, PERHAPS EVEN THE WORLD, HAVE BEEN WORN AWAY TO NOTHING.
AHA-- DUST MEANS MOVEMENT!
AND MOVEMENT, *LIFE!*
A SMALL BRAIN, BUT STILL SUFFICIENT TO *POSSESS!*
POOR THING.
HELPLESS IN MY MIND'S GRASP.
YOUR DAY IS DONE.
FORGIVE ME.
I WISH I HAD SOME ALTERNATIVE...
...BUT THE CHILD AND I MUST EAT.
THESE LITTLE LIVES SUSTAIN US--AS DO THE WEAPONS AND CLOTHING I SCAVENGE FROM THOSE WHO PERISHED HERE BEFORE US.
FOR HER SAKE--MUCH AS I WISH DIFFERENTLY--
--I MUST SURVIVE!

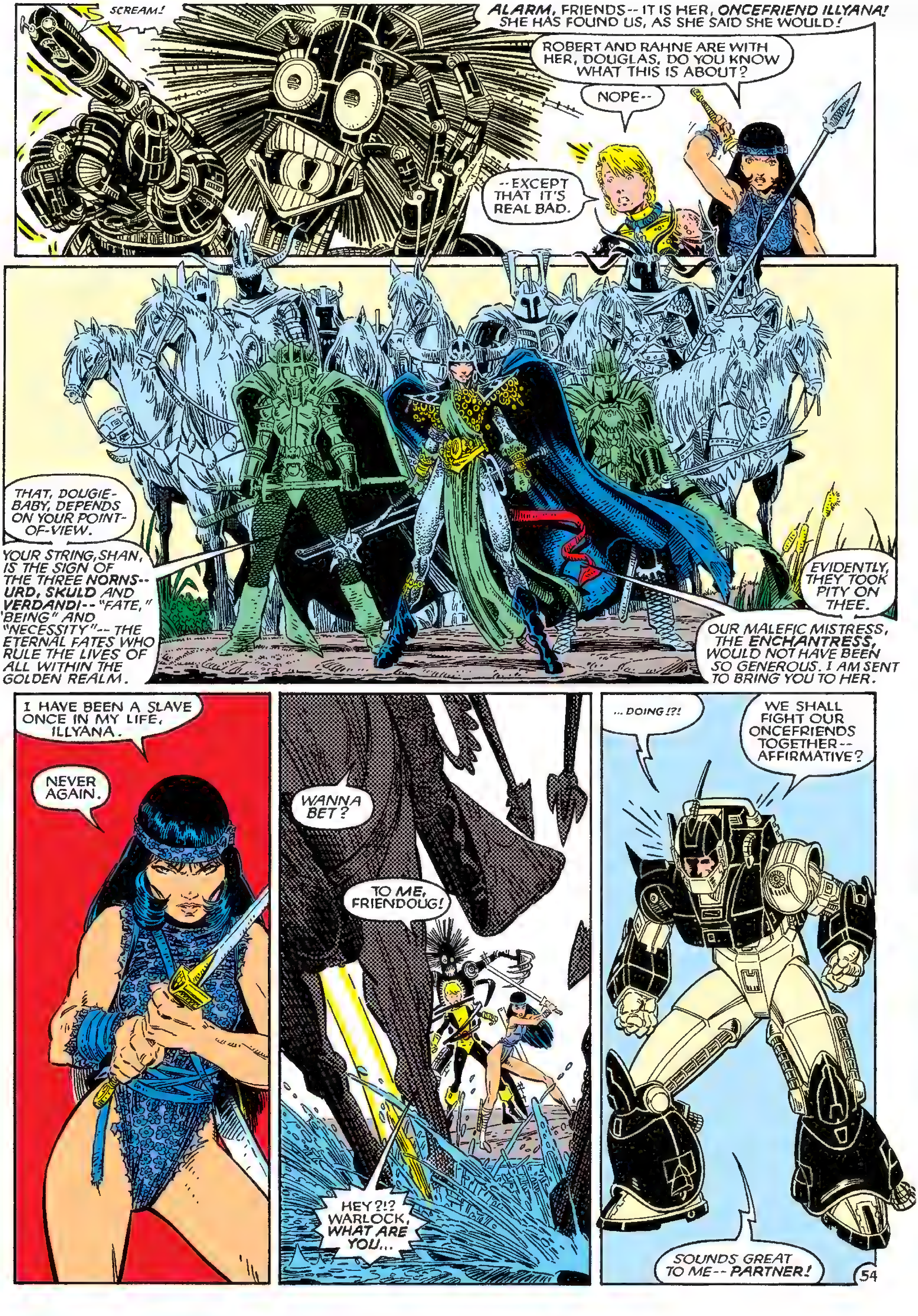

SUNSPOT.
THIS IS THE *LIFE!*
NO WORRIES ABOUT SCHOOL. OR MY FATHER JOINING FORCES WITH PROFESSOR XAVIER'S MORTAL ENEMIES, THE HELLFIRE CLUB. OR MY MOTHER NEVER BEING AROUND. OR, BEST OF ALL...
...MY POWER HURTING ANYONE.
ASGARD'S MY FONDEST DREAM COME TRUE!
EXCEPT MY FRIENDS AREN'T BY MY SIDE TO SHARE IT.
I SHOULD BE OUT SEARCHING FOR THEM--BUT I DON'T KNOW WHERE TO START.
I TOLD THE *WARRIORS THREE*--IF ANYONE CAN FIND THE MUTANTS...
...IT'S THEM.
HI, BOBBY.
ILLYANA?!!
WHY ARE YOU DRESSED LIKE THAT?! WHAT DO YOU WANT?!?
THEE, DUMMY.
I DO NOT WISH TO GO.
SO WHO SAID THOU HAST A CHOICE?
ENCASED IN THIS SUIT OF ELDRITCH ARMOR, THOU ART NOW AS MUCH THE ENCHANTRESS' EAGER, DUTIFUL SLAVE...
...AS I.
ISN'T THAT NICE?

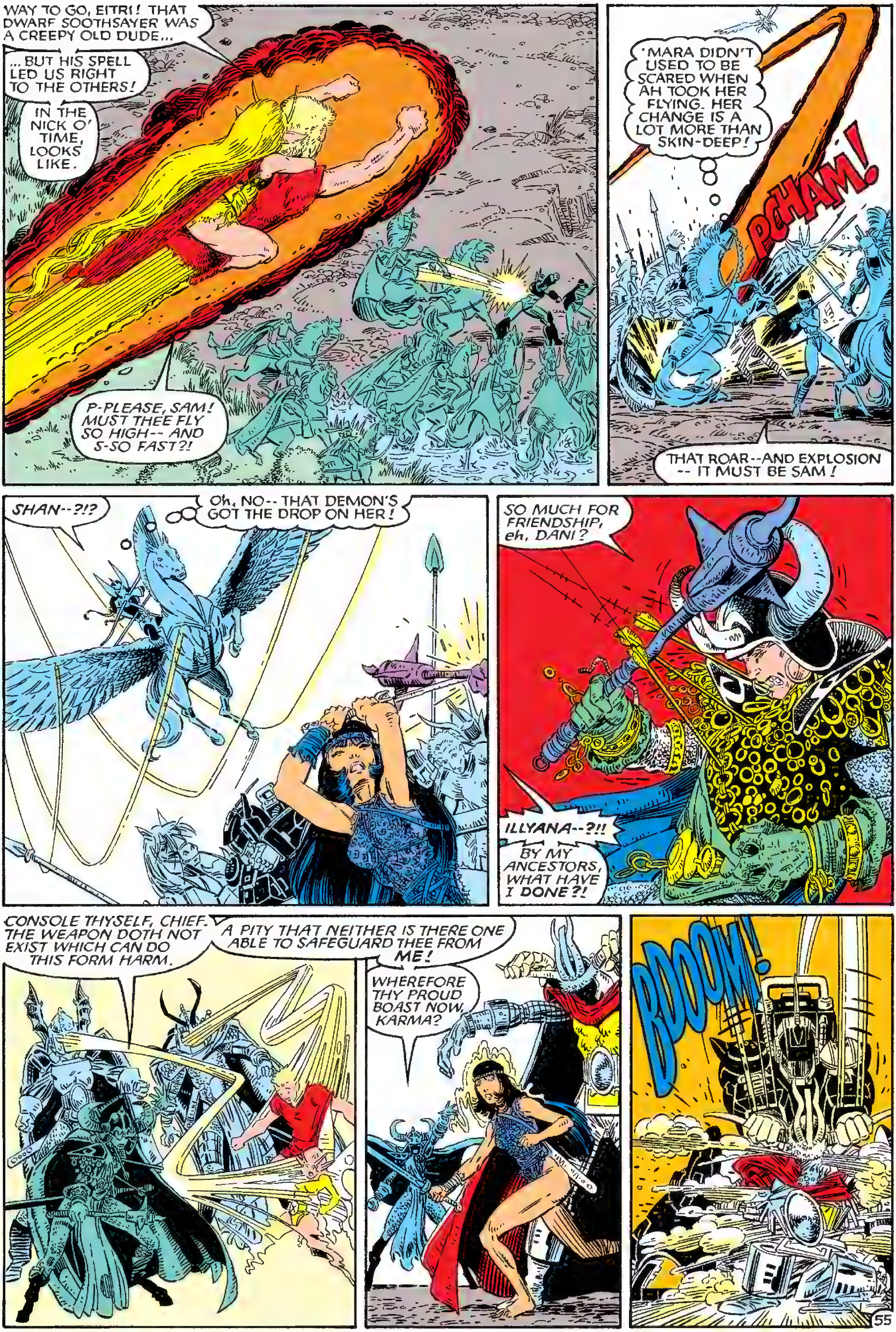

CANNONBALL.
BEHOLD, ORORO, THE ENTRANCE TO EITRI'S DOMAIN.
IT IS NOT YET MEET FOR LESSER-- DWARVISH-- EYES TO SEE THEE AS THOU TRULY ART.
THEREFORE, I SHALL DISGUISE THEE-- WITH FREYA'S ENCHANTED CLOAK OF FEATHERS--
--IN THE SHAPE AND SEEMING OF A FALCON!
WATCH, MY PRETTY-- LISTEN AND LEARN! COME TO LOVE THIS REALM WITH ALL THY NOBLE HEART...
...THE BETTER TO HELP ME RULE IT.
Oh, SAM--WHAT WILL BECOME OF ME?!
I AM NO LONGER HUMAN! I AM BOUND, BODY AND SOUL, TO THE FAERY-FOLK! TO EVEN SET FOOT ON EARTH AGAIN WOULD DESTROY ME!
WE'LL FIND A WAY TO FREE YOU, AMARA. YOU GOT MY WORD.
YOU DON'T UNDERSTAND. THE WAY I AM FEELS RIGHT AND NATURAL! MY OLD FORM-- THE LIFE I LED-- SEEMS LIKE A DREAM, GOSSAMER WISPS OF MEMORY THAT WHIRL FARTHER OUT OF REACH WITH EVERY PASSING SECOND.
HOW CAN I EVER BECOME MYSELF AGAIN, SAM, IF I FORGET WHO AND WHAT THAT SELF WAS?!
HAIL, EITRI-- LORD OF THE FORGE!
GREETINGS, LOKI-- SECOND SON OF ODIN.
ARROGANT KNAVE, TO DARE MOCK ME?!
WHAT BRINGS THE TRICKSTER TO MY JARLHALL?
A COMMISSION, BLACKSMITH. A HAMMER-- THE EQUAL OF MJOLNIR AND STORMBREAKER-- FOR ASGARD'S NEW THUNDER GOD!
AND WHAT, PRAY TELL, HATH HAPPENED TO THE OLD ONE?

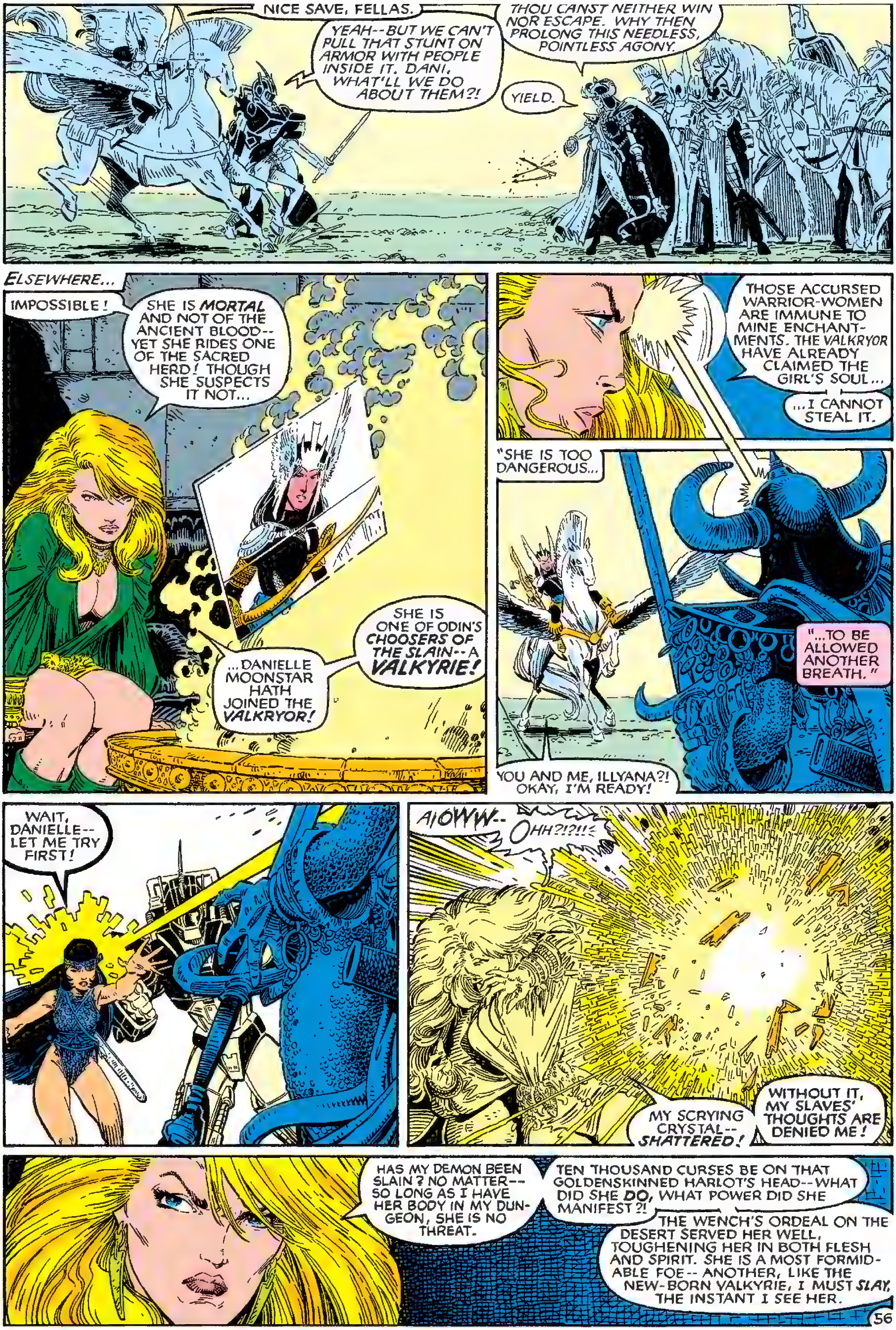

BETA RAY BILL HATH RETURNED TO HIS OWN PEOPLE...
...AND MY BROTHER, THOR'S, HEART HATH E'ER BELONGED AS MUCH TO MIDGARD AS THE GOLDEN REALM.
BUT WHAT HAVE WE HERE?
WHOA!
Tsk-tsk-tsk!
BIT TALL FOR A DWARF, EITRI.
MAYHAP A SPY?
SAM!
AN IDIOT NEPHEW, M'LORD, WHOSE DAM DALLIED O'ERMUCH WITH ONE OF THOU AESIR, HENCE HIS UNNATURAL STATURE.
I MISLIKE SKULKERS. I SHOULD CLOSE HIS PRYING EYES FOREVER.
BUT SINCE THY DAUGHTER SEEMS TO CARE FOR HIM...
...I SHALL GRACIOUSLY STAY MY WRATH.
THERE, I HAVE DONE THEE A KINDNESS.
WILT RETURN MY FAVOR?
AYE.
SPLENDID.
AND WITH LOKI'S DEPARTURE...
THAT WAS A MAGIC FALCON -- BUT FREYA'S CLOAK OF TRANSFORMATION IS GOLDEN, SO TOO SHOULD BE THE BIRD! NEVER HAVE I SEEN SUCH STRANGE COLORING.
BLACK FEATHERS -- A WHITE CREST -- BLUE EYES -- COULD THAT HAVE BEEN ORORO?! IS SHE LOKI'S PRISONER?!
IF SO, LAD, THOU HAST INDEED A TASK BEFORE THEE.
AH'M REAL SORRY, SIR. AH DIDN'T MEAN TO PUT YOU ON THE SPOT LIKE THAT.
ONE WAY OR THE OTHER, SAM, LOKI WOULD HAVE GOTTEN HIS WAY.
THIS TIME, THOUGH, IT'LL COST HIM DEAR -- FOR NOBODY THREATENS ME AND MINE, IN MY OWN HALL, BEFORE MY THRONE! WHATEVER AID THOU DOST REQUIRE IN THINE ENTERPRISE, SAM -- TO SAVE THY FRIEND -- IS THINE!

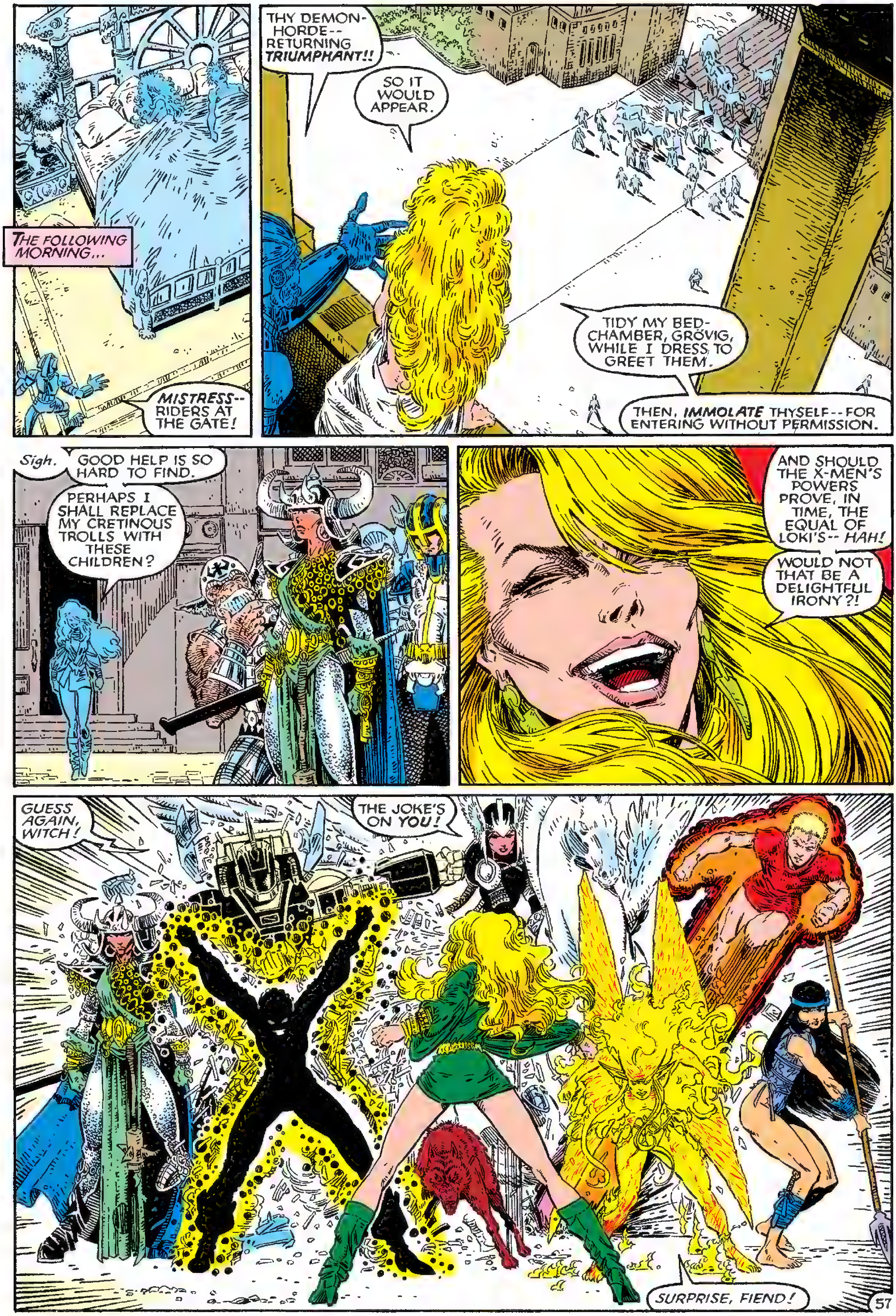

WOLFSBANE.
ARRROOOOOOOOOOOOO
WHY DO YOU SING SO SAD A SONG?
I WAS LONELY.
I... MISSED THEE, RAHNE.
REALLY?
I WOULD NOT LIE.
COME HOME, LITTLE ONE.
SHARE MY LIFE--
--MY LOVE!
RAHNE--?!!
I CANNOT!
YOU MUST NA' ASK THAT OF ME--EVER!
HOW CAN THIS BE?!?
JUST THINKING OF HIM MAKES MY HEART ACHE. I WANT TO SAY, YES, TO BE WITH HIM ALWAYS--
--BUT IS THA' NOT WRONG, AND WICKED?!
BUT THEN, AM I?
I'M SO CONFUSED! IF WHAT WE FEEL IS TRUE LOVE, WHY MUST WE DENY IT?
POOR WEE LASS--
ILLYANA--?!?
THAT PRECIOUS LOVE...
...IS NOW FOREVER GONE FROM THY LIFE.
THY HEART IS FOREVER BOUND...
...TO EVIL!
RAHNE!

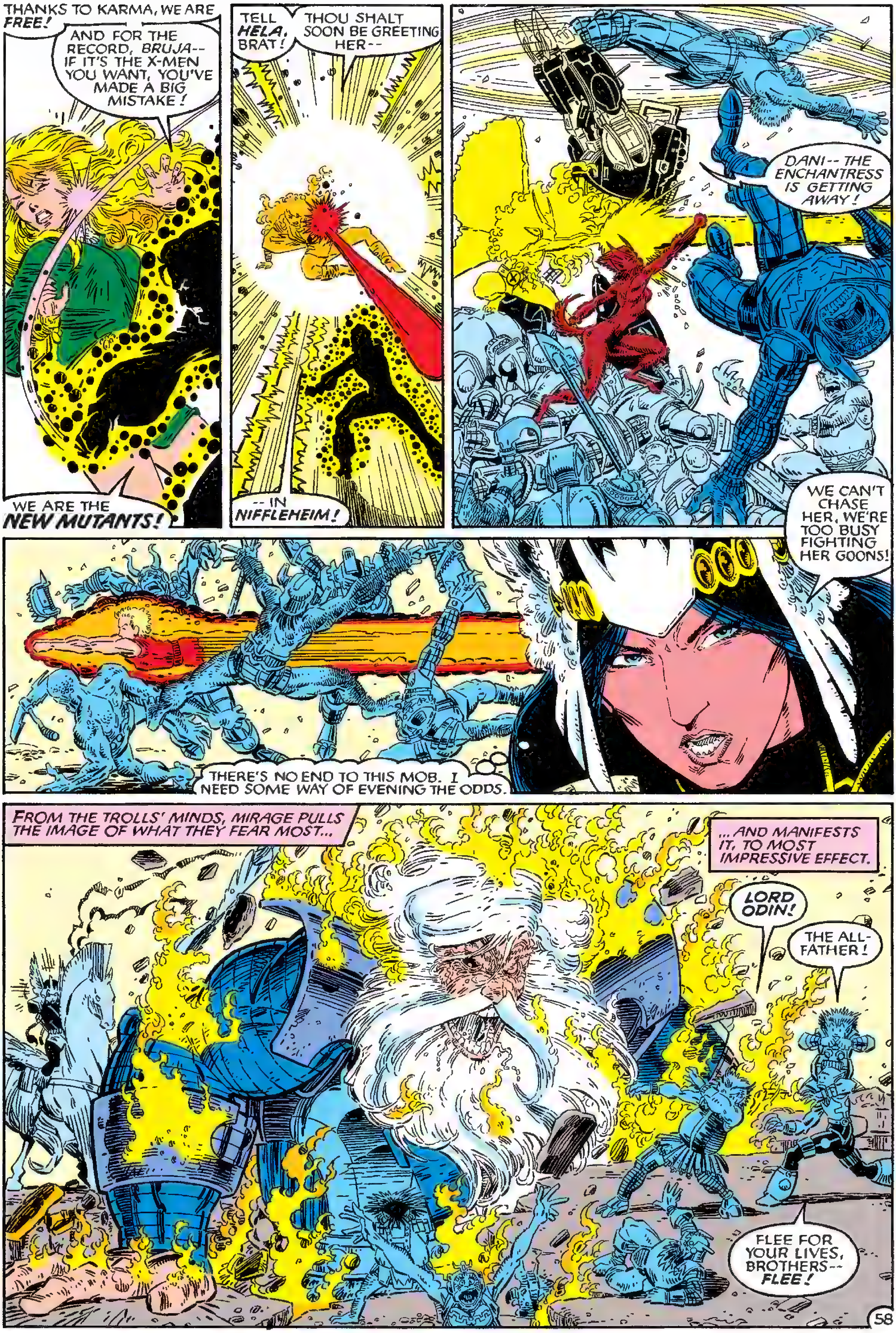

KARMA.
WATER?!
A STREAM-- GREEN GRASS-- GROWING THINGS-- LIFE!!
C'EST UN MIRACLE! SAINTS BE PRAISED, CHILD, WE'VE REACHED THE END OF THE DESERT!
I THOUGHT THIS DAY WOULD NEVER COME.
WITH A LITTLE LUCK, PERHAPS WE'LL FIND SOME PEOPLE-- WHAT'S THAT?!
SELF'S SENSORS ARE NOT IN ERROR.
WARLOCK--?!
DOUGLAS!
SHAN--?!
PERCEIVE? SELF TOLD YOU, FRIENDOUG.
I WAS CERTAIN I'D NEVER SEE ANY OF YOU AGAIN.
Oh, I AM SO HAPPY!
LIKEWISE!
SHAN -- YOU GOT SKINNY!
AN ETERNITY LOST ON THAT WASTELAND WILL DO THAT, MON AMI.
TO CHANGE YOU SO MUCH, THOUGH...
QUERY? CONTACT WITH FAMILIAR LIFESIGNS...
...MUST HAVE TAKEN MONTHS. BUT 'LOCK AND I HAVE BEEN HERE...
...HARDLY MORE THAN A WEEK!
AS I FEARED, THEN -- ILLYANA DID HURL US ALL THROUGH TIME.
I HAD GIVEN UP-- AND WOULD HAVE SURELY PERISHED-- IF NOT FOR-- DOUGLAS, MY COMPANION, SHE'S GONE!
WHERE DID THIS WHITE STRING COME FROM?! WHAT DOES IT MEAN?!!

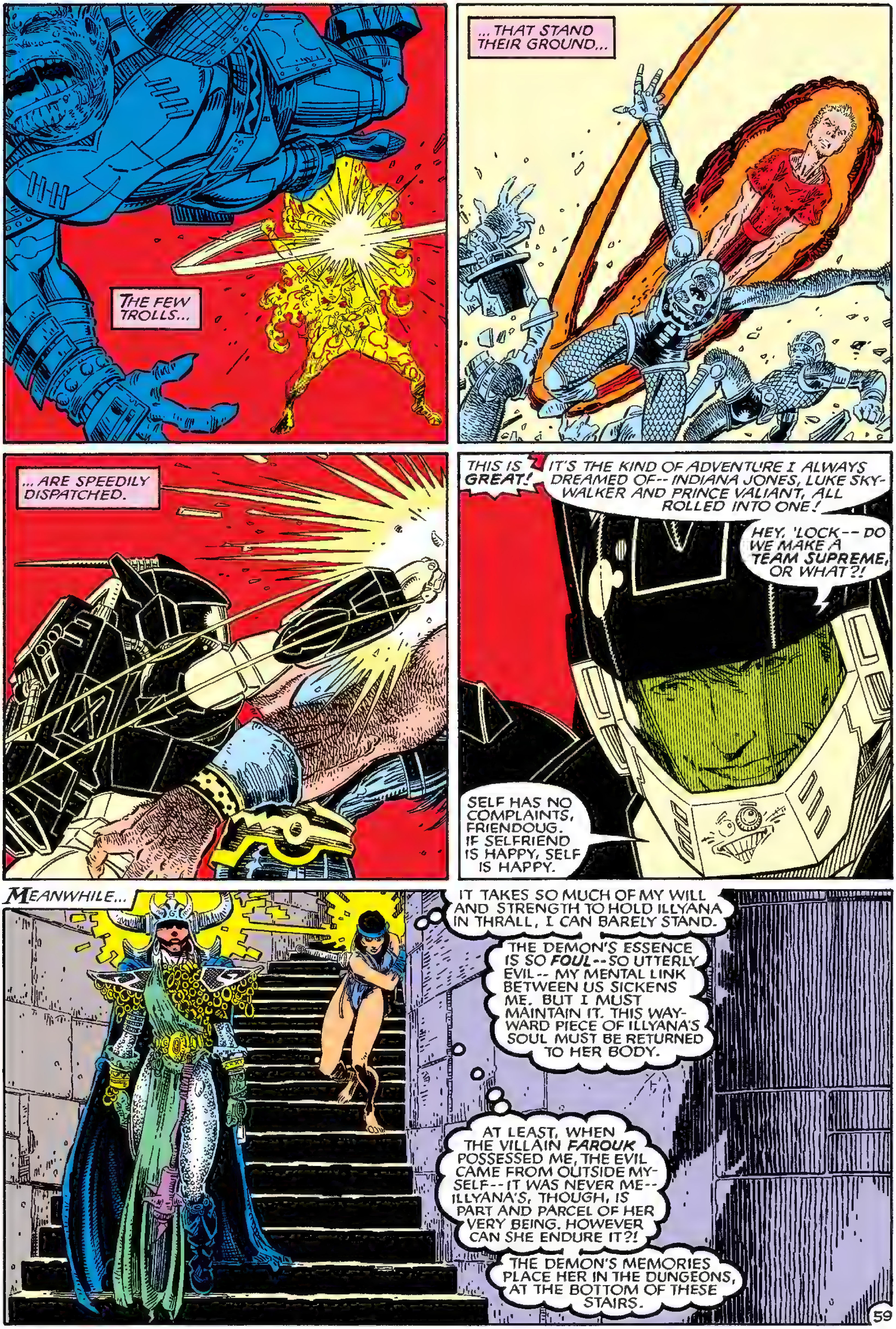

SCREAM!
ALARM, FRIENDS-- IT IS HER, ONCEFRIEND ILLYANA! SHE HAS FOUND US, AS SHE SAID SHE WOULD!
ROBERT AND RAHNE ARE WITH HER, DOUGLAS, DO YOU KNOW WHAT THIS IS ABOUT?
NOPE--
--EXCEPT THAT IT'S REAL BAD.
THAT, DOUGIE-BABY, DEPENDS ON YOUR POINT-OF-VIEW.
YOUR STRING, SHAN, IS THE SIGN OF THE THREE NORNS-- URD, SKULD AND VERDANDI-- "FATE," "BEING" AND "NECESSITY"-- THE ETERNAL FATES WHO RULE THE LIVES OF ALL WITHIN THE GOLDEN REALM.
EVIDENTLY, THEY TOOK PITY ON THEE.
OUR MALEFIC MISTRESS, THE ENCHANTRESS, WOULD NOT HAVE BEEN SO GENEROUS. I AM SENT TO BRING YOU TO HER.
I HAVE BEEN A SLAVE ONCE IN MY LIFE, ILLYANA.
NEVER AGAIN.
WANNA BET?
TO ME, FRIENDOUG!
HEY?!? WARLOCK, WHAT ARE YOU...
...DOING!?!
WE SHALL FIGHT OUR ONCEFRIENDS TOGETHER-- AFFIRMATIVE?
SOUNDS GREAT TO ME-- PARTNER!

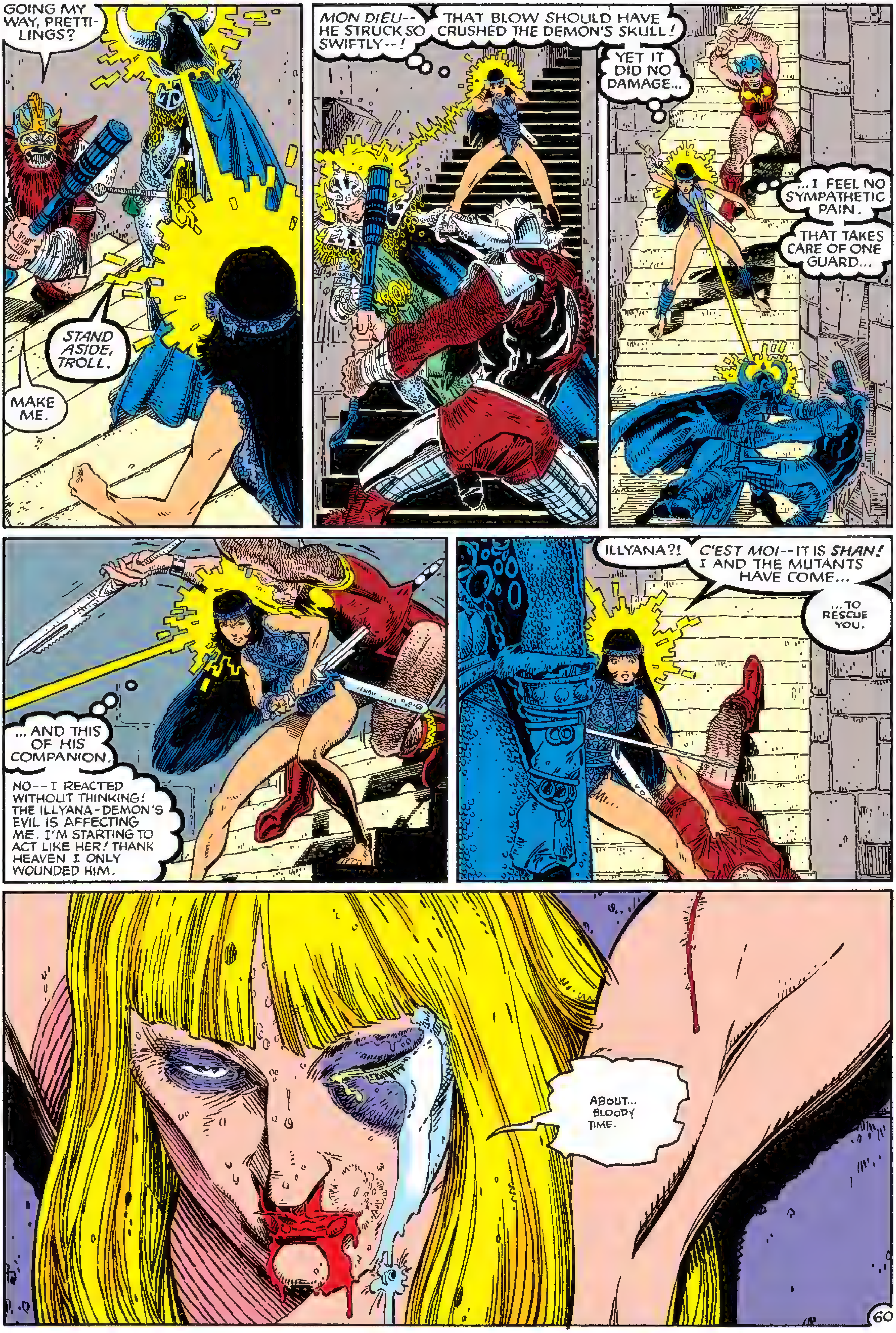

WAY TO GO, EITRI! THAT DWARF SOOTHSAYER WAS A CREEPY OLD DUDE...
...BUT HIS SPELL LED US RIGHT TO THE OTHERS!
IN THE NICK O' TIME, LOOKS LIKE.
P-PLEASE, SAM! MUST THEE FLY SO HIGH-- AND S-SO FAST?!
'MARA DIDN'T USED TO BE SCARED WHEN AH TOOK HER FLYING. HER CHANGE IS A LOT MORE THAN SKIN-DEEP!
PCHAM!
THAT ROAR--AND EXPLOSION -- IT MUST BE SAM!
SHAN--?!?
Oh, NO-- THAT DEMON'S GOT THE DROP ON HER!
SO MUCH FOR FRIENDSHIP, eh, DANI?
ILLYANA--?!!
BY MY ANCESTORS, WHAT HAVE I DONE?!
CONSOLE THYSELF, CHIEF. THE WEAPON DOTH NOT EXIST WHICH CAN DO THIS FORM HARM.
A PITY THAT NEITHER IS THERE ONE ABLE TO SAFEGUARD THEE FROM ME!
WHEREFORE THY PROUD BOAST NOW, KARMA?
BDOOM!

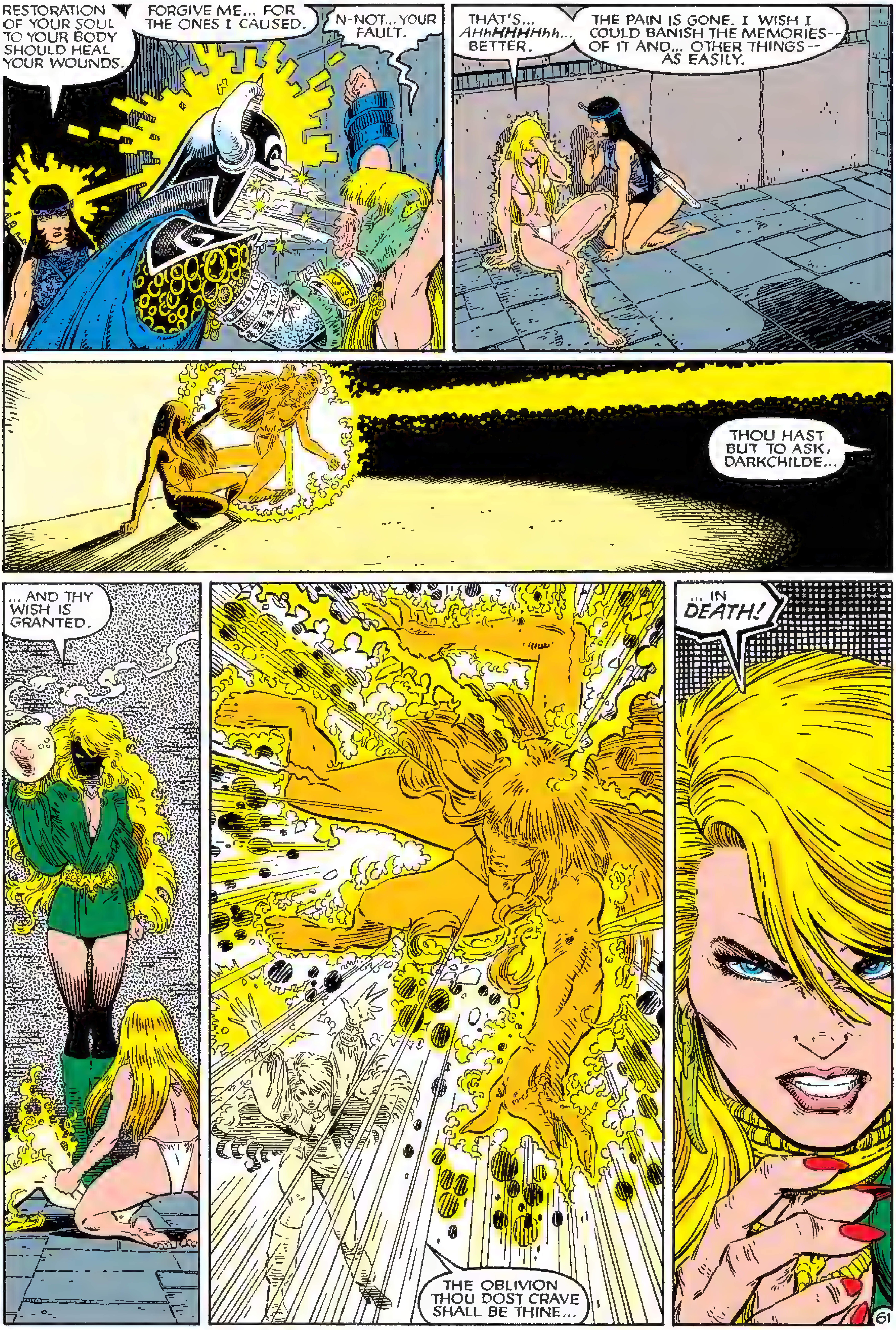

NICE SAVE, FELLAS.
YEAH--BUT WE CAN'T PULL THAT STUNT ON ARMOR WITH PEOPLE INSIDE IT. DANI, WHAT'LL WE DO ABOUT THEM?!
THOU CANST NEITHER WIN NOR ESCAPE. WHY THEN PROLONG THIS NEEDLESS, POINTLESS AGONY.
YIELD.
ELSEWHERE...
IMPOSSIBLE!
SHE IS MORTAL AND NOT OF THE ANCIENT BLOOD-- YET SHE RIDES ONE OF THE SACRED HERD! THOUGH SHE SUSPECTS IT NOT...
...DANIELLE MOONSTAR HATH JOINED THE VALKRYOR!
SHE IS ONE OF ODIN'S CHOOSERS OF THE SLAIN--A VALKYRIE!
THOSE ACCURSED WARRIOR-WOMEN ARE IMMUNE TO MINE ENCHANTMENTS. THE VALKRYOR HAVE ALREADY CLAIMED THE GIRL'S SOUL...
...I CANNOT STEAL IT.
"SHE IS TOO DANGEROUS...
"...TO BE ALLOWED ANOTHER BREATH."
YOU AND ME, ILLYANA?! OKAY, I'M READY!
WAIT, DANIELLE-- LET ME TRY FIRST!
AIOWW-- OHH?!?!!
MY SCRYING CRYSTAL-- SHATTERED!
WITHOUT IT, MY SLAVES' THOUGHTS ARE DENIED ME!
HAS MY DEMON BEEN SLAIN? NO MATTER-- SO LONG AS I HAVE HER BODY IN MY DUNGEON, SHE IS NO THREAT.
TEN THOUSAND CURSES BE ON THAT GOLDENSKINNED HARLOT'S HEAD--WHAT DID SHE DO, WHAT POWER DID SHE MANIFEST?!
THE WENCH'S ORDEAL ON THE DESERT SERVED HER WELL, TOUGHENING HER IN BOTH FLESH AND SPIRIT. SHE IS A MOST FORMIDABLE FOE-- ANOTHER, LIKE THE NEW-BORN VALKYRIE, I MUST SLAY THE INSTANT I SEE HER.

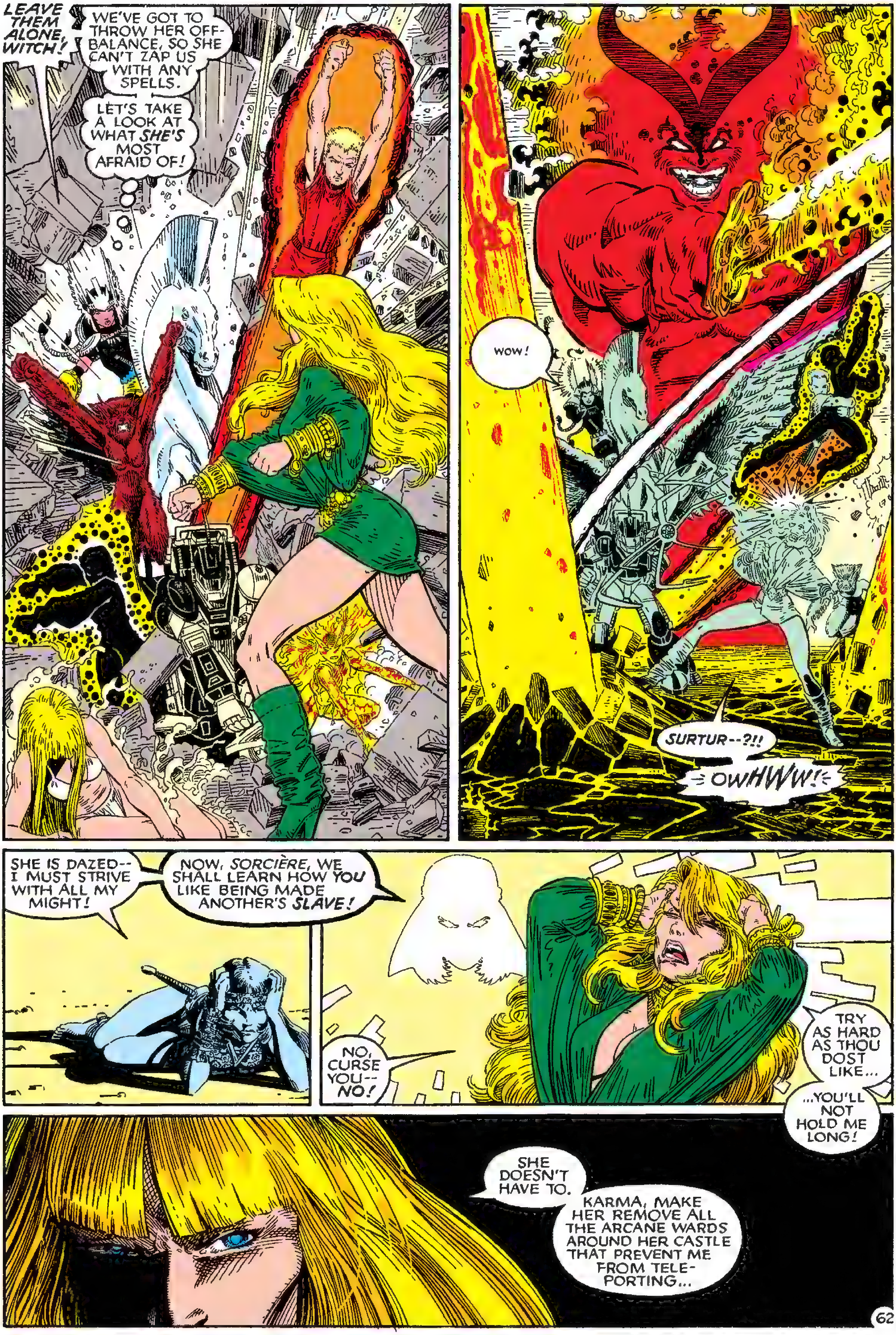

THE FOLLOWING MORNING...
MISTRESS-- RIDERS AT THE GATE!
THY DEMON-HORDE-- RETURNING TRIUMPHANT!!
SO IT WOULD APPEAR.
TIDY MY BED-CHAMBER, GRÖVIG, WHILE I DRESS TO GREET THEM.
THEN, IMMOLATE THYSELF--FOR ENTERING WITHOUT PERMISSION.
Sigh.
GOOD HELP IS SO HARD TO FIND.
PERHAPS I SHALL REPLACE MY CRETINOUS TROLLS WITH THESE CHILDREN?
AND SHOULD THE X-MEN'S POWERS PROVE, IN TIME, THE EQUAL OF LOKI'S-- HAH!
WOULD NOT THAT BE A DELIGHTFUL IRONY?!
GUESS AGAIN, WITCH!
THE JOKE'S ON YOU!
SURPRISE, FIEND!

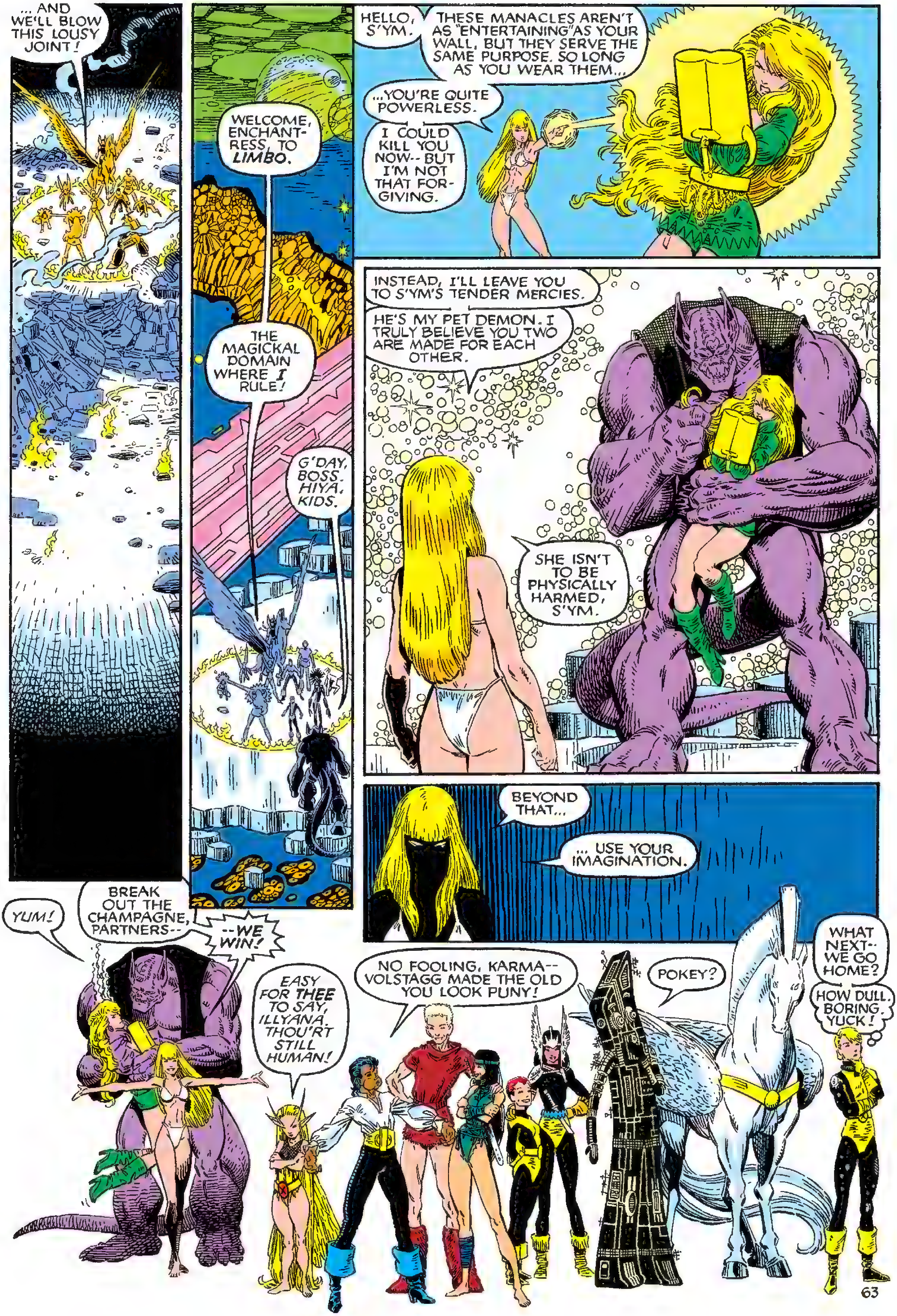

THANKS TO KARMA, WE ARE **FREE!**
AND FOR THE RECORD, *BRUJA*-- IF IT'S THE X-MEN YOU WANT, YOU'VE MADE A BIG MISTAKE!
WE ARE THE **NEW MUTANTS!**
TELL **HELA,** BRAT!
THOU SHALT SOON BE GREETING HER--
--IN **NIFFLEHEIM!**
DANI-- THE ENCHANTRESS IS GETTING AWAY!
WE CAN'T CHASE HER, WE'RE TOO BUSY FIGHTING HER GOONS!
THERE'S NO END TO THIS MOB. *I* NEED SOME WAY OF EVENING THE ODDS.
FROM THE TROLLS' MINDS, MIRAGE PULLS THE IMAGE OF WHAT THEY FEAR MOST...
...AND MANIFESTS IT, TO MOST IMPRESSIVE EFFECT.
LORD ODIN!
THE ALL-FATHER!
FLEE FOR YOUR LIVES, BROTHERS-- **FLEE!**

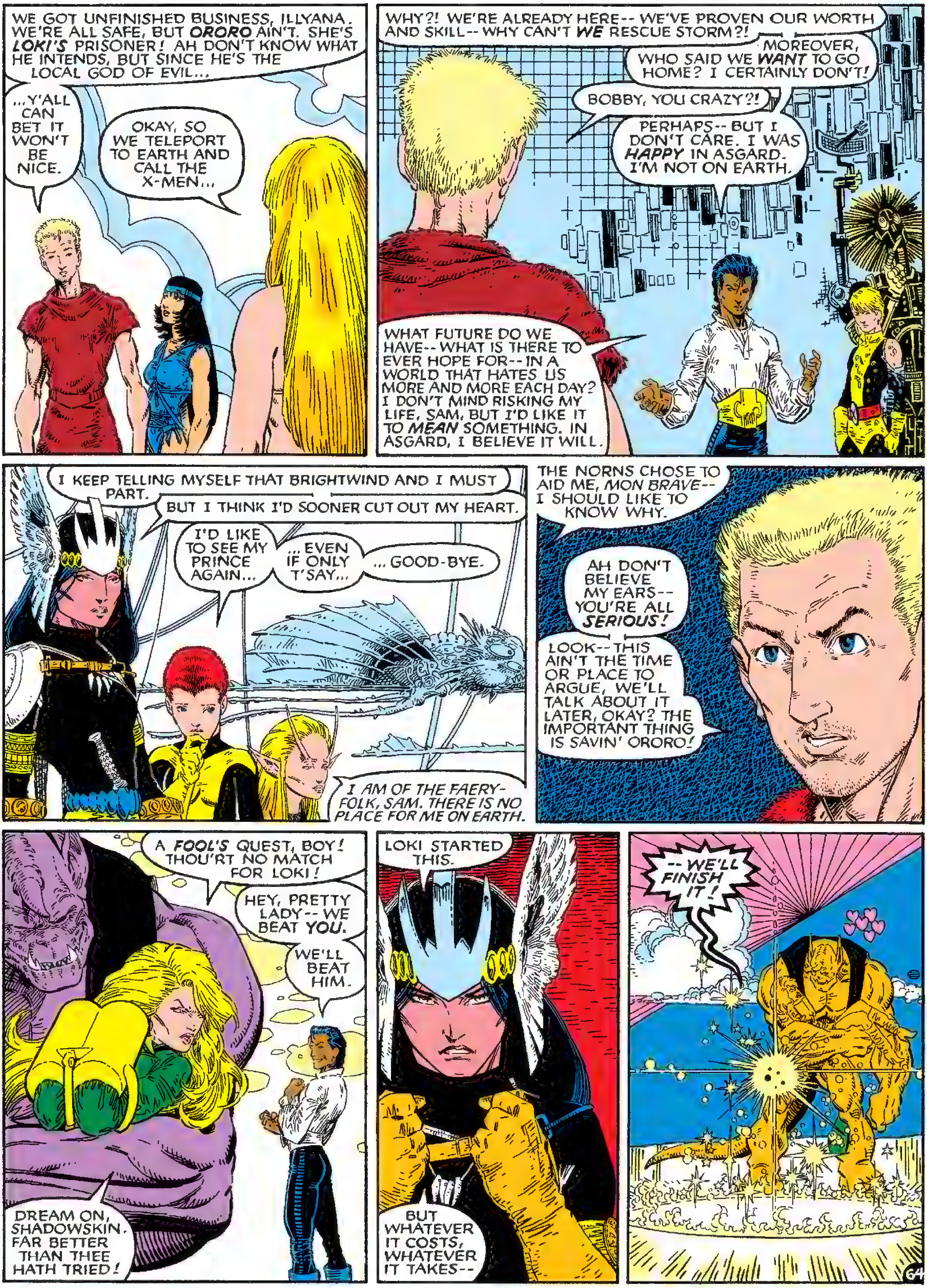

THE FEW TROLLS...
...THAT STAND THEIR GROUND...
...ARE SPEEDILY DISPATCHED.
THIS IS GREAT!
IT'S THE KIND OF ADVENTURE I ALWAYS DREAMED OF-- INDIANA JONES, LUKE SKYWALKER AND PRINCE VALIANT, ALL ROLLED INTO ONE!
HEY, 'LOCK-- DO WE MAKE A TEAM SUPREME, OR WHAT?!
SELF HAS NO COMPLAINTS, FRIENDOUG. IF SELFRIEND IS HAPPY, SELF IS HAPPY.
MEANWHILE...
IT TAKES SO MUCH OF MY WILL AND STRENGTH TO HOLD ILLYANA IN THRALL, I CAN BARELY STAND.
THE DEMON'S ESSENCE IS SO FOUL-- SO UTTERLY EVIL-- MY MENTAL LINK BETWEEN US SICKENS ME. BUT I MUST MAINTAIN IT. THIS WAYWARD PIECE OF ILLYANA'S SOUL MUST BE RETURNED TO HER BODY.
AT LEAST, WHEN THE VILLAIN FAROUK POSSESSED ME, THE EVIL CAME FROM OUTSIDE MYSELF-- IT WAS NEVER ME-- ILLYANA'S, THOUGH, IS PART AND PARCEL OF HER VERY BEING. HOWEVER CAN SHE ENDURE IT?!
THE DEMON'S MEMORIES PLACE HER IN THE DUNGEONS, AT THE BOTTOM OF THESE STAIRS.


GOING MY WAY, PRETTILINGS?
STAND ASIDE, TROLL.
MAKE ME.
MON DIEU-- HE STRUCK SO SWIFTLY--!
THAT BLOW SHOULD HAVE CRUSHED THE DEMON'S SKULL!
YET IT DID NO DAMAGE...
...I FEEL NO SYMPATHETIC PAIN.
THAT TAKES CARE OF ONE GUARD...
...AND THIS OF HIS COMPANION.
NO-- I REACTED WITHOUT THINKING! THE ILLYANA-DEMON'S EVIL IS AFFECTING ME. I'M STARTING TO ACT LIKE HER! THANK HEAVEN I ONLY WOUNDED HIM.
ILLYANA?!
C'EST MOI--IT IS SHAN! I AND THE MUTANTS HAVE COME...
...TO RESCUE YOU.
ABOUT... BLOODY TIME.


RESTORATION OF YOUR SOUL TO YOUR BODY SHOULD HEAL YOUR WOUNDS.
FORGIVE ME... FOR THE ONES I CAUSED.
N-NOT... YOUR FAULT.
THAT'S... AHhHHHHhh... BETTER.
THE PAIN IS GONE. I WISH I COULD BANISH THE MEMORIES-- OF IT AND... OTHER THINGS-- AS EASILY.
THOU HAST BUT TO ASK, DARKCHILDE...
... AND THY WISH IS GRANTED.
THE OBLIVION THOU DOST CRAVE SHALL BE THINE...
... IN DEATH!


LEAVE THEM ALONE, WITCH!
WE'VE GOT TO THROW HER OFF-BALANCE, SO SHE CAN'T ZAP US WITH ANY SPELLS.
LET'S TAKE A LOOK AT WHAT SHE'S MOST AFRAID OF!
WOW!
SURTUR--?!!
OWHWW!
SHE IS DAZED-- I MUST STRIVE WITH ALL MY MIGHT!
NOW, SORCIÈRE, WE SHALL LEARN HOW YOU LIKE BEING MADE ANOTHER'S SLAVE!
NO, CURSE YOU-- NO!
TRY AS HARD AS THOU DOST LIKE...
...YOU'LL NOT HOLD ME LONG!
SHE DOESN'T HAVE TO.
KARMA, MAKE HER REMOVE ALL THE ARCANE WARDS AROUND HER CASTLE THAT PREVENT ME FROM TELEPORTING...


... AND WE'LL BLOW THIS LOUSY JOINT!
WELCOME, ENCHANTRESS, TO *LIMBO*.
THE MAGICKAL DOMAIN WHERE *I* RULE!
G'DAY, BOSS. HIYA, KIDS.
HELLO, S'YM.
THESE MANACLES AREN'T AS "ENTERTAINING" AS YOUR WALL, BUT THEY SERVE THE SAME PURPOSE. SO LONG AS YOU WEAR THEM...
...YOU'RE QUITE POWERLESS.
I COULD KILL YOU NOW-- BUT I'M NOT THAT FORGIVING.
INSTEAD, I'LL LEAVE YOU TO S'YM'S TENDER MERCIES.
HE'S MY PET DEMON. I TRULY BELIEVE YOU TWO ARE MADE FOR EACH OTHER.
SHE ISN'T TO BE PHYSICALLY HARMED, S'YM.
BEYOND THAT...
... USE YOUR IMAGINATION.
YUM!
BREAK OUT THE CHAMPAGNE, PARTNERS--
--WE WIN!
*EASY FOR **THEE** TO SAY, ILLYANA. THOU'RT STILL HUMAN!*
NO FOOLING, KARMA-- VOLSTAGG MADE THE OLD YOU LOOK PUNY!
POKEY?
WHAT NEXT-- WE GO HOME?
HOW DULL. BORING. YUCK!


WE GOT UNFINISHED BUSINESS, ILLYANA. WE'RE ALL SAFE, BUT ***ORORO*** AIN'T. SHE'S ***LOKI'S*** PRISONER! AH DON'T KNOW WHAT HE INTENDS, BUT SINCE HE'S THE LOCAL GOD OF EVIL...
...Y'ALL CAN BET IT WON'T BE NICE.
OKAY, SO WE TELEPORT TO EARTH AND CALL THE X-MEN...
WHY?! WE'RE ALREADY HERE-- WE'VE PROVEN OUR WORTH AND SKILL-- WHY CAN'T ***WE*** RESCUE STORM?!
MOREOVER, WHO SAID WE ***WANT*** TO GO HOME? I CERTAINLY DON'T!
BOBBY, YOU CRAZY?!
PERHAPS-- BUT I DON'T CARE. I WAS ***HAPPY*** IN ASGARD. I'M NOT ON EARTH.
WHAT FUTURE DO WE HAVE-- WHAT IS THERE TO EVER HOPE FOR-- IN A WORLD THAT HATES US MORE AND MORE EACH DAY? I DON'T MIND RISKING MY LIFE, SAM, BUT I'D LIKE IT TO ***MEAN*** SOMETHING. IN ASGARD, I BELIEVE IT WILL.
I KEEP TELLING MYSELF THAT BRIGHTWIND AND I MUST PART.
BUT I THINK I'D SOONER CUT OUT MY HEART.
I'D LIKE TO SEE MY PRINCE AGAIN...
...EVEN IF ONLY T'SAY...
...GOOD-BYE.
I AM OF THE FAERY-FOLK, SAM. THERE IS NO PLACE FOR ME ON EARTH.
THE NORNS CHOSE TO AID ME, *MON BRAVE*-- I SHOULD LIKE TO KNOW WHY.
AH DON'T BELIEVE MY EARS-- YOU'RE ALL ***SERIOUS!***
LOOK-- THIS AIN'T THE TIME OR PLACE TO ARGUE. WE'LL TALK ABOUT IT LATER, OKAY? THE IMPORTANT THING IS SAVIN' ORORO!
A ***FOOL'S*** QUEST, BOY! THOU'RT NO MATCH FOR LOKI!
HEY, PRETTY LADY-- WE BEAT ***YOU.***
WE'LL BEAT HIM.
DREAM ON, SHADOWSKIN. FAR BETTER THAN THEE HATH TRIED!
LOKI STARTED THIS.
BUT WHATEVER IT COSTS, WHATEVER IT TAKES--
--WE'LL FINISH IT!

TO BE CONCLUDED -- IN X-MEN ANNUAL #9 --

"THERE'S NO PLACE LIKE HOME!"

MARVEL®

GIANT-SIZED ANNUAL

X-MEN®

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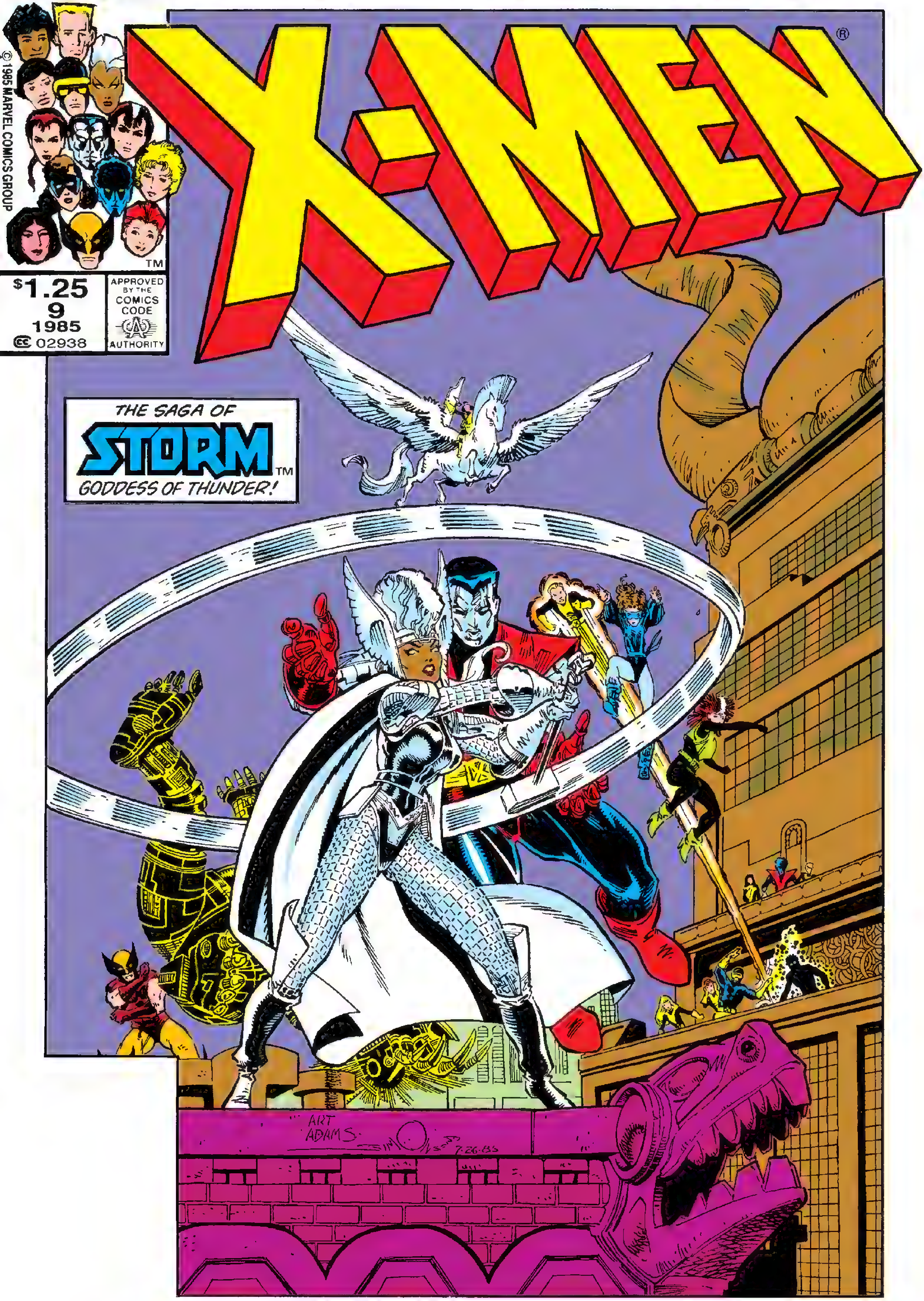
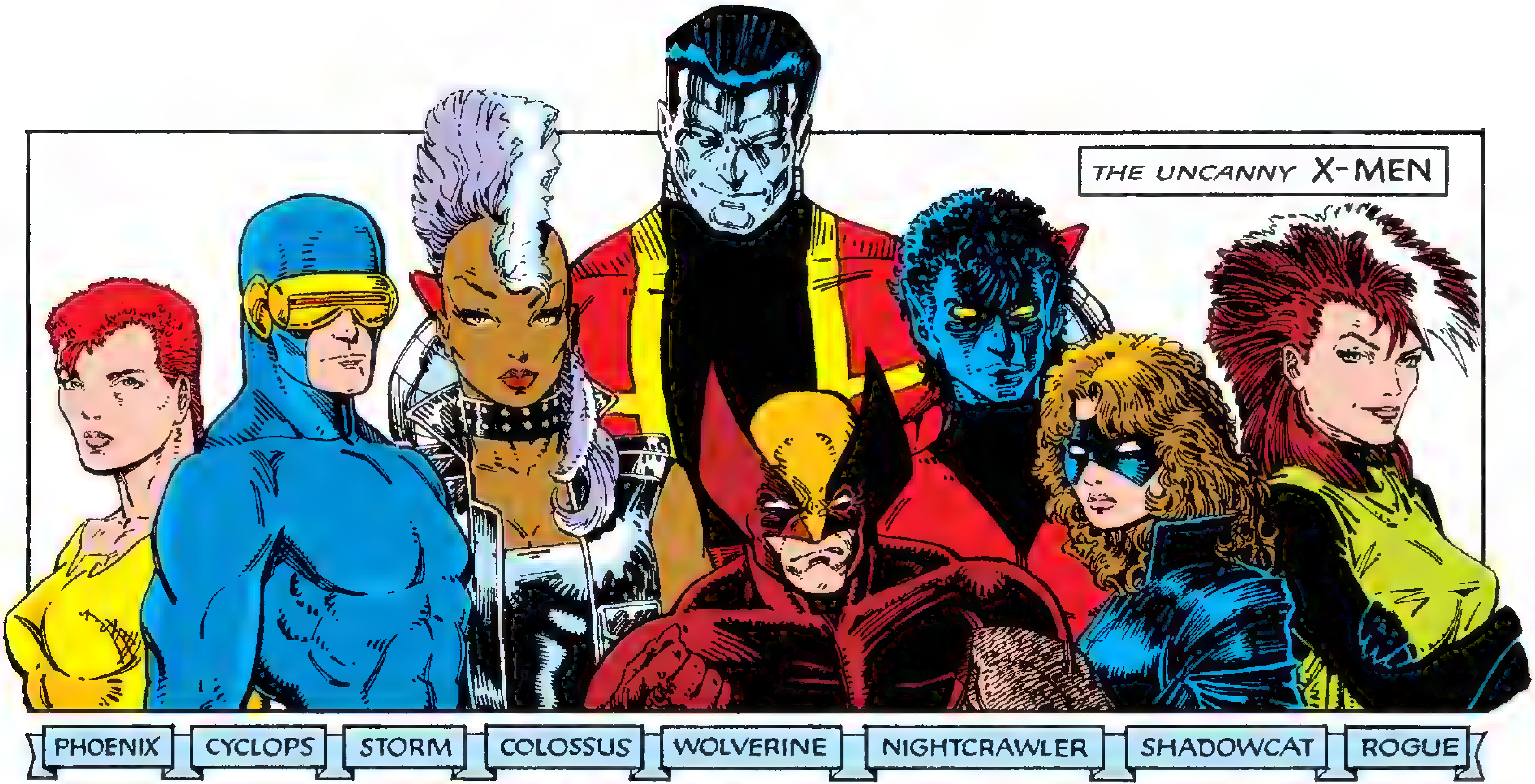
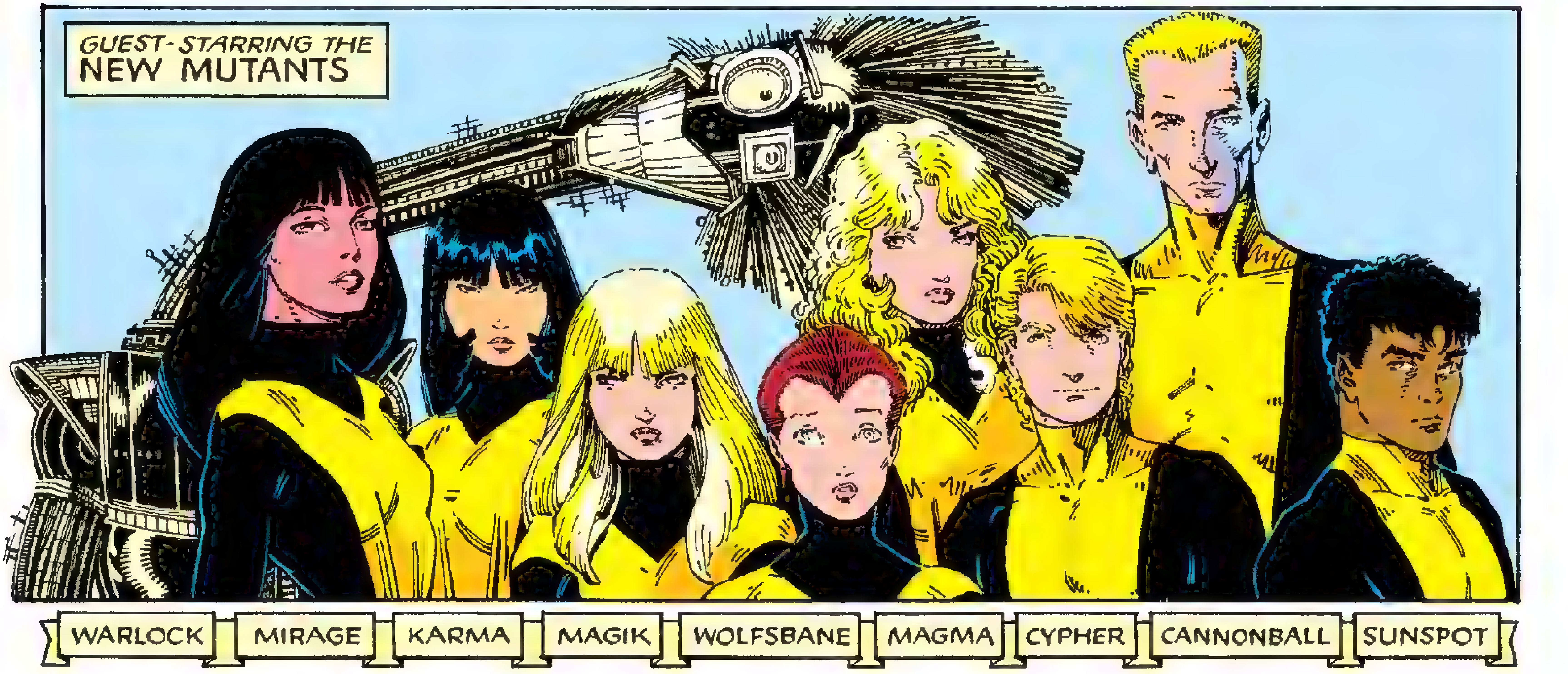

THE SAGA OF
STORM™
GODDESS OF THUNDER!
ART ADAMS
7.26.85


THE UNCANNY X-MEN
PHOENIX
CYCLOPS
STORM
COLOSSUS
WOLVERINE
NIGHTCRAWLER
SHADOWCAT
ROGUE

STAN LEE *PRESENTS*

THERE'S NO place like HOME II

CHRIS CLAREMONT *writer* ARTHUR ADAMS *penciler* ALAN GORDON & MIKE MIGNOLA & ART ADAMS *inkers*
TOM ORZECHOWSKI, *letterer* PETRA SCOTESE, *colorist* ANN NOCENTI, *editor* JIM SHOOTER, *chief*


GUEST-STARRING THE NEW MUTANTS
WARLOCK
MIRAGE
KARMA
MAGIK
WOLFSBANE
MAGMA
CYPHER
CANNONBALL
SUNSPOT

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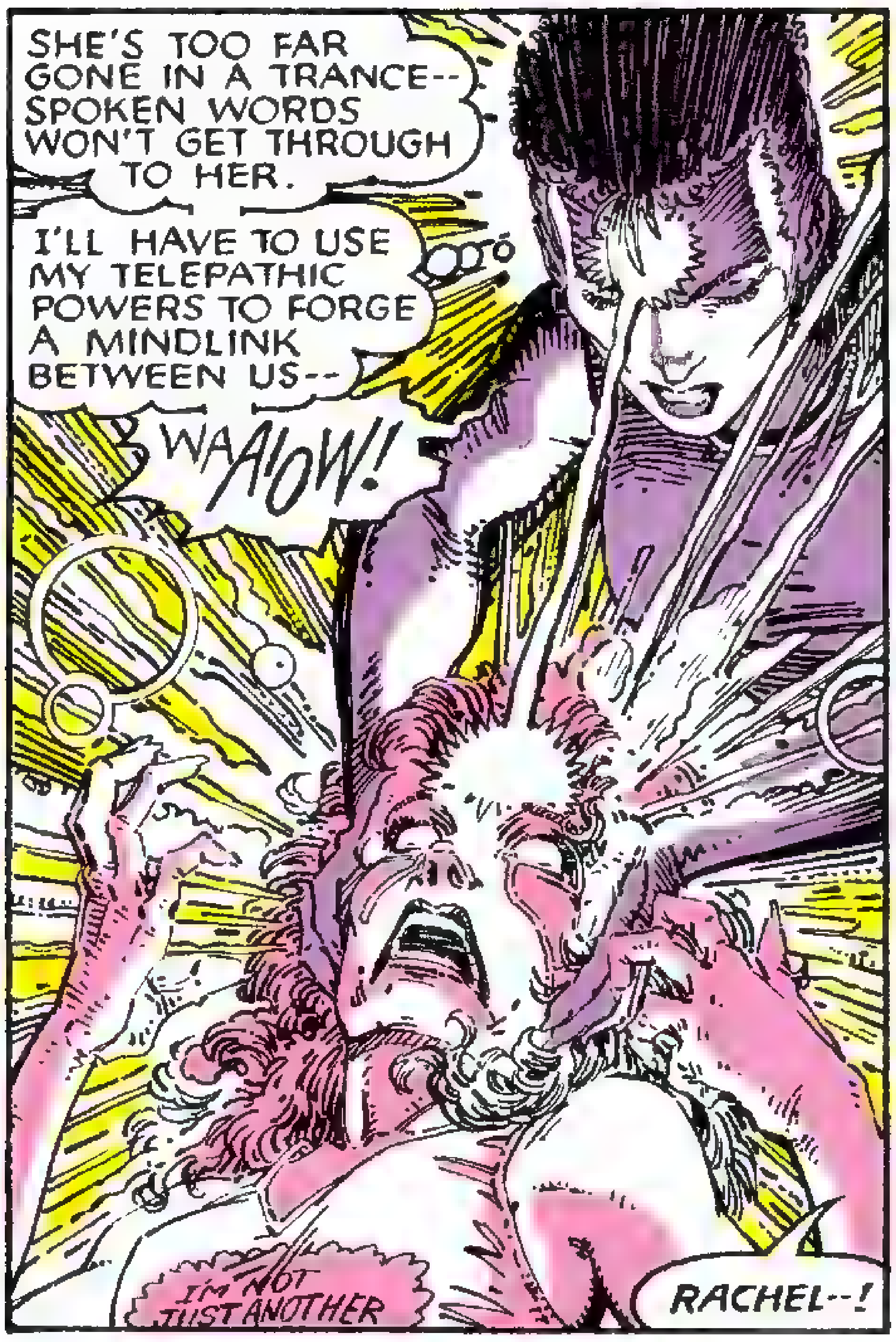
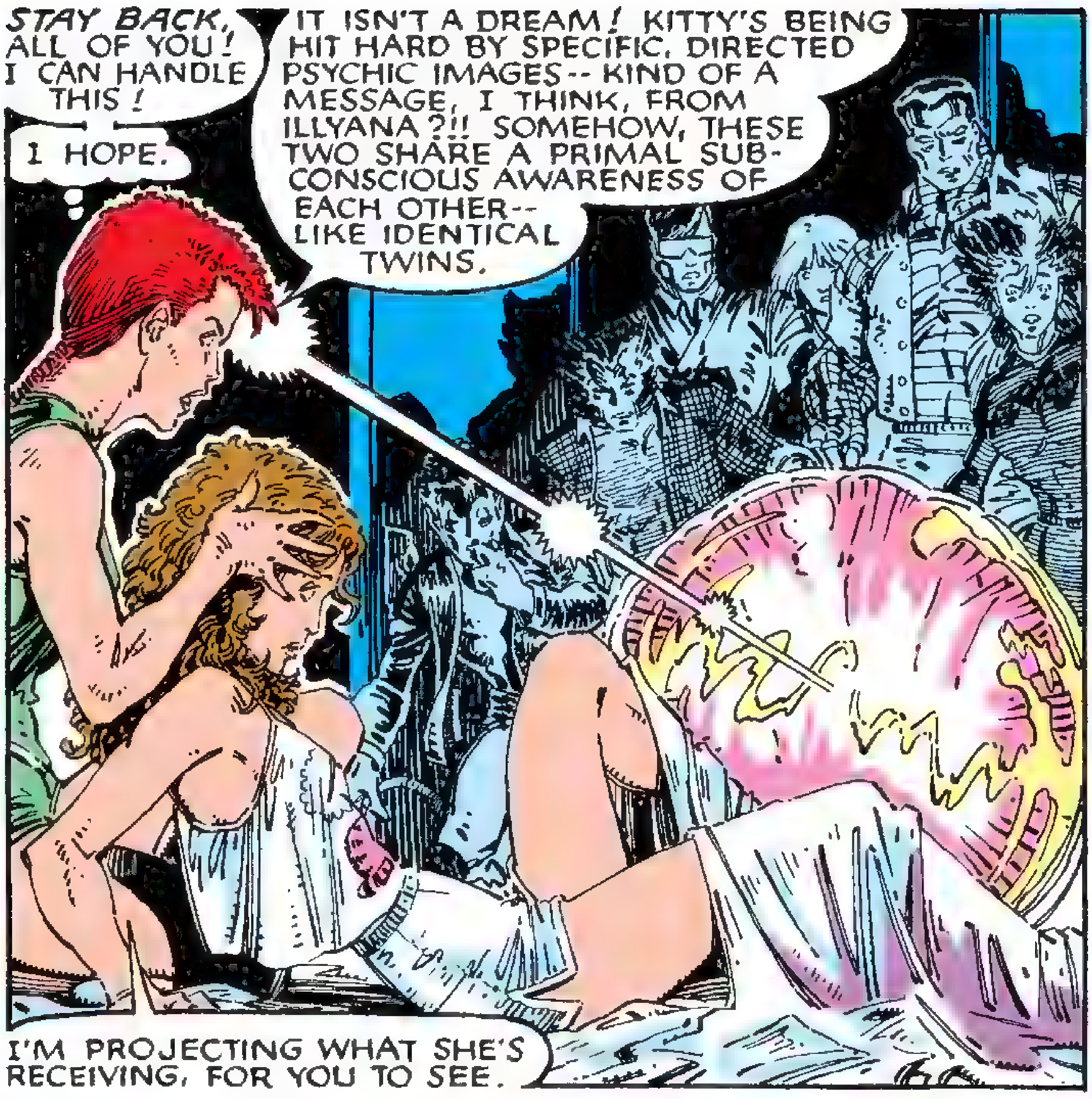
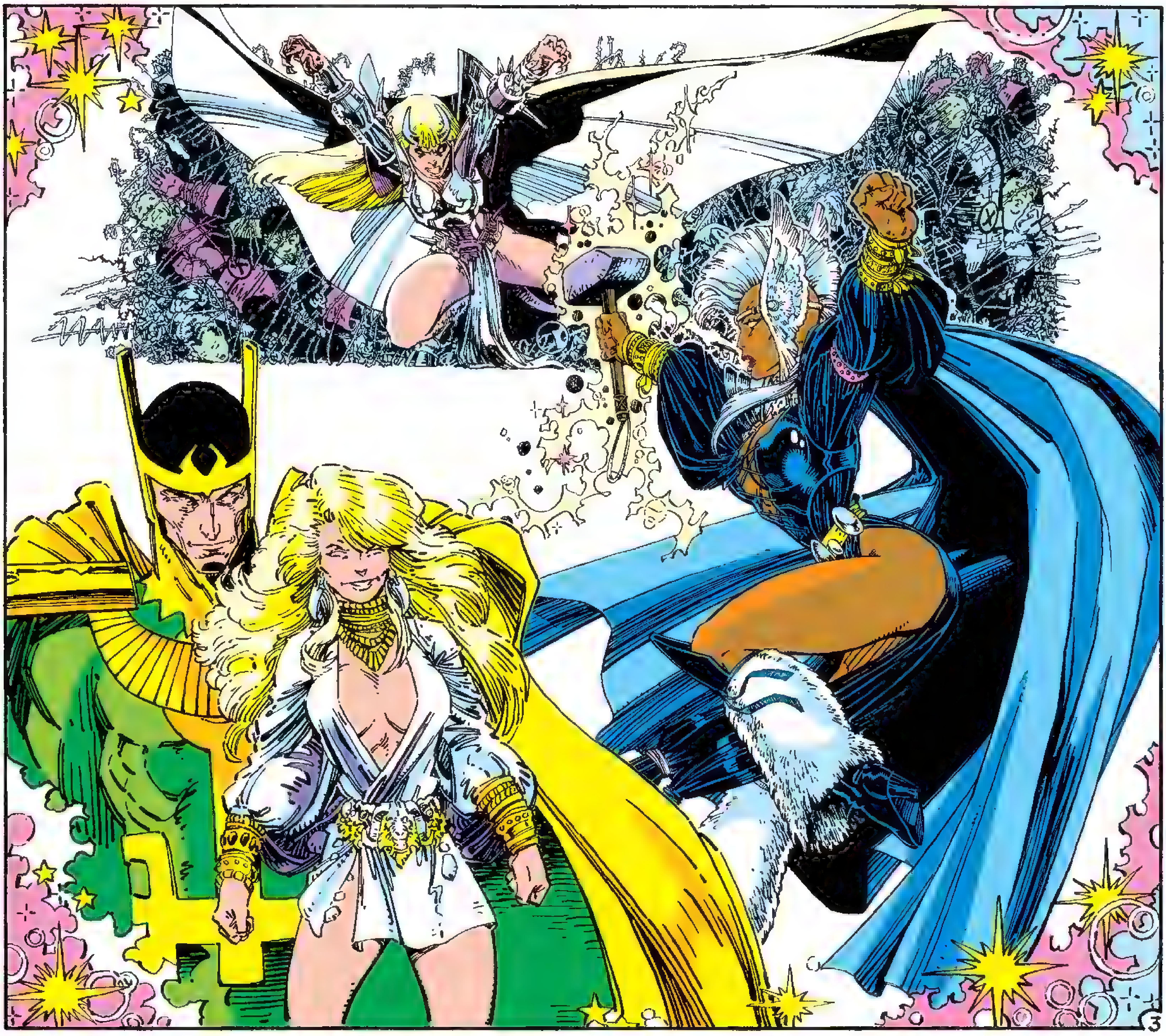
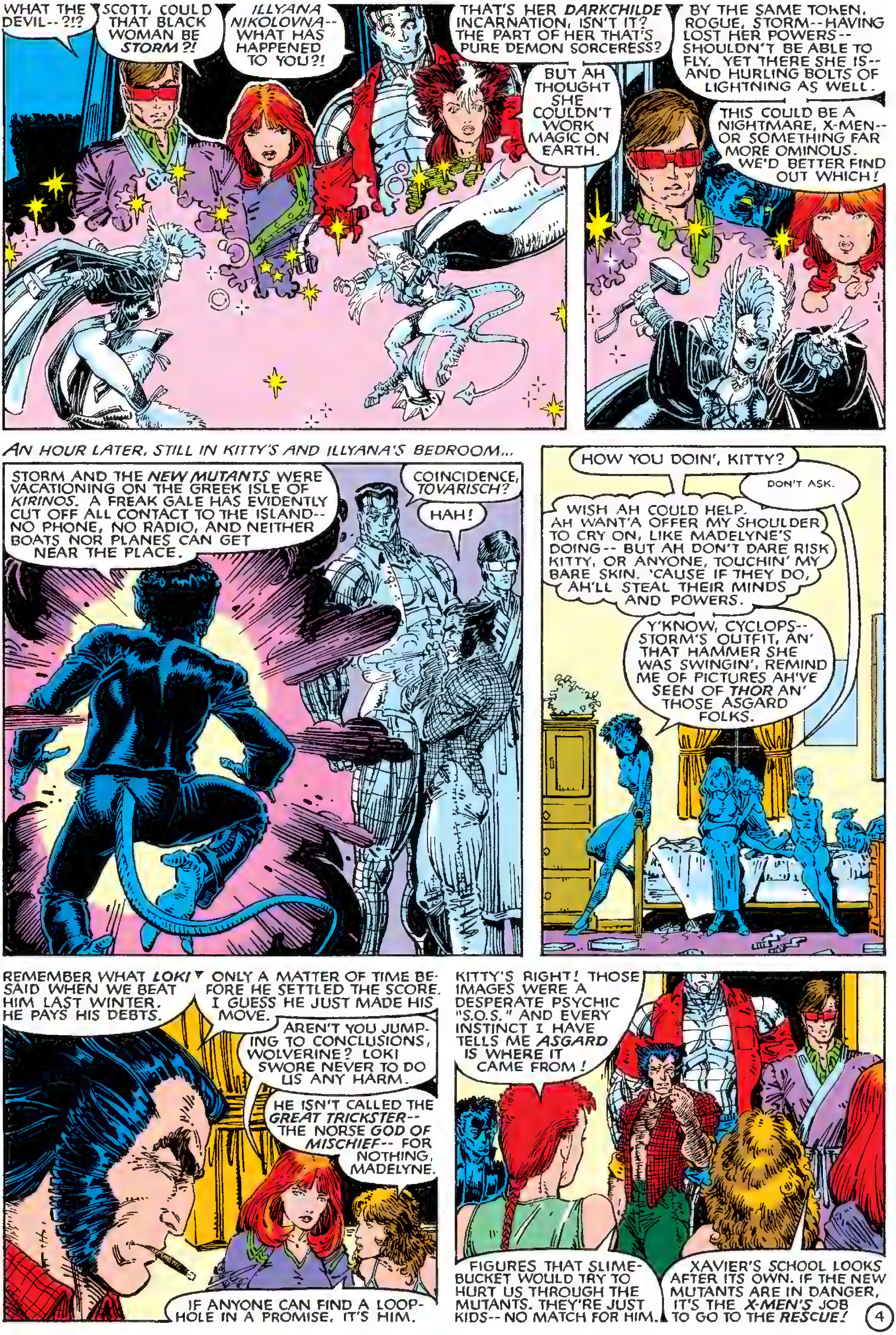
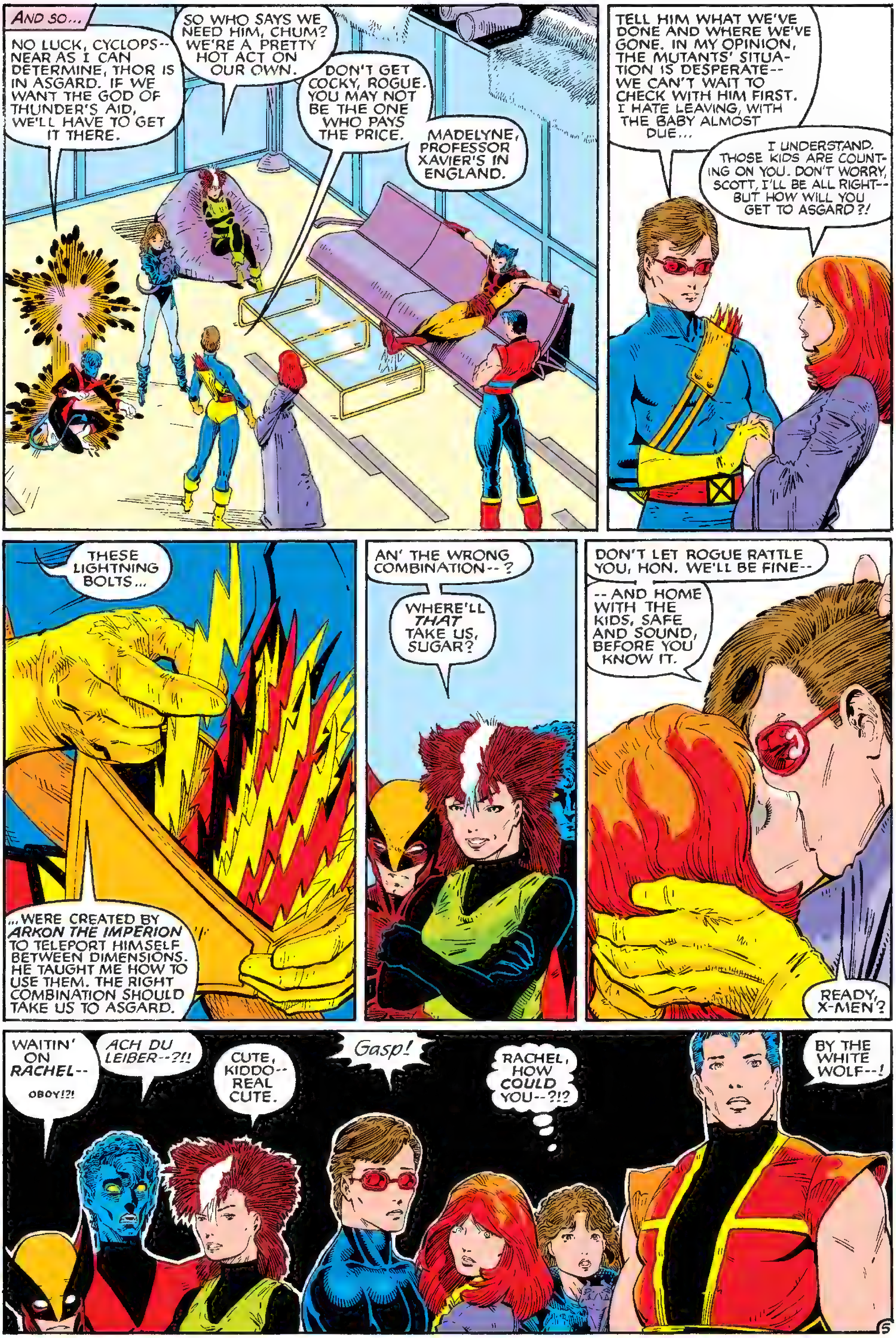
ONE MID-SUMMER'S NIGHT...
EEEEEEEEEEEEEEE
...AT PROFESSOR CHARLES XAVIER'S SCHOOL FOR GIFTED YOUNGSTERS...
WHAT WAS THAT-- WHO SCREAMED?!
RRIP
X-MEN--ARE WE UNDER *ATTACK?!!*
IF WE ARE, COLOSSUS, I GUARANTEE WHO-EVER'S RESPONSIBLE...
... IS GONNA REGRET IT.
ROGUE, YOU CHECK THE GROUNDS WITH ME--!
WOLVERINE--THERE'S NO ENEMY-- IT'S *KITTY!*
SHE'S IN AGONY! HER THOUGHTS-- HER TERROR-- THEY'RE OVER-WHELMING ME! I CAN'T BLOCK THEM OUT!
SNIKT
NIGHT-CRAWLER, I HAVE TO REACH HER--
NO PROBLEM, RACHEL. I'LL HAVE YOU BY HER SIDE...
... IN NO TIME AT ALL.
BAMF
AND WITH THAT, *KURT WAGNER* TELEPORTS FROM THE HALL...
...TO THE ROOM SHARED BY COLOSSUS' YOUNGER SISTER, *ILLYANA*, AND *KITTY PRYDE*.
ZUM *TEUFUL!*
WHAT'S HAPPENING TO HER-- THIS CANNOT BE AN ORDINARY NIGHTMARE!
RACHEL-- CAN YOU HELP HER?!
I HAVE TO, NIGHTCRAWLER. THERE'S NO ONE ELSE WHO CAN.

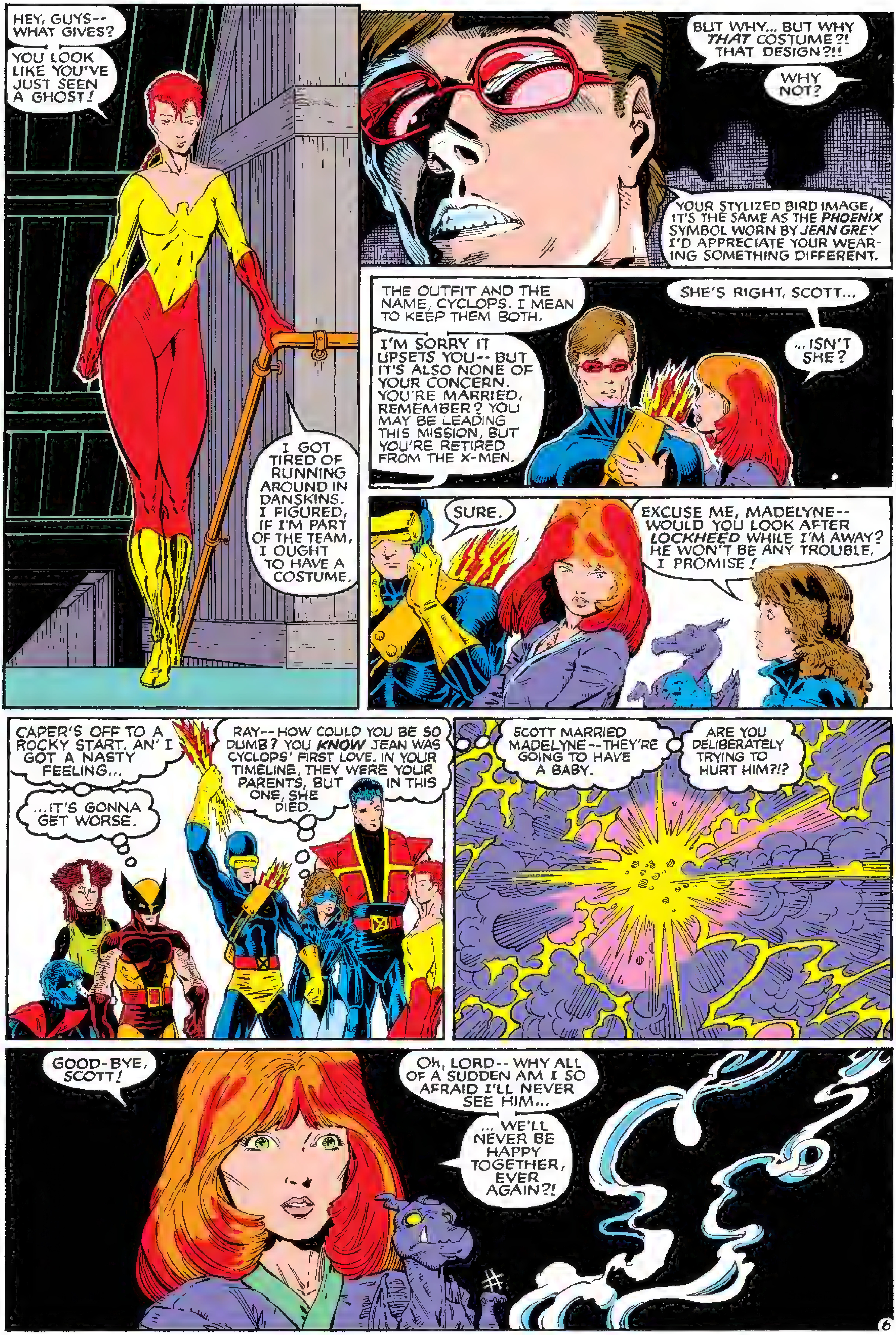

SHE'S TOO FAR GONE IN A TRANCE-- SPOKEN WORDS WON'T GET THROUGH TO HER.
I'LL HAVE TO USE MY TELEPATHIC POWERS TO FORGE A MINDLINK BETWEEN US--
WAAIOW!
I'M NOT JUST ANOTHER
RACHEL--!

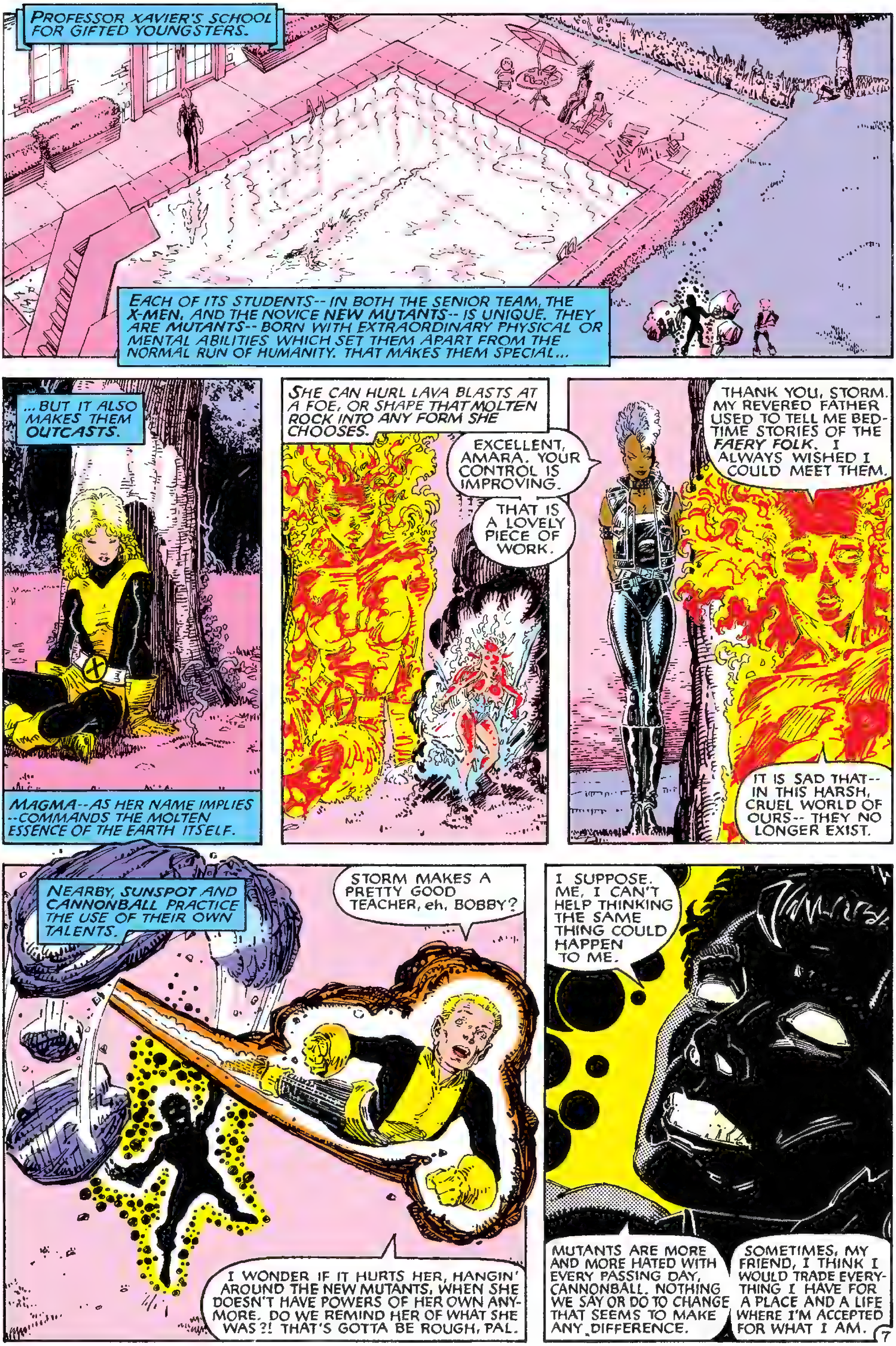

STAY BACK, ALL OF YOU! I CAN HANDLE THIS!
I HOPE.
IT ISN'T A DREAM! KITTY'S BEING HIT HARD BY SPECIFIC, DIRECTED PSYCHIC IMAGES-- KIND OF A MESSAGE, I THINK, FROM ILLYANA?!! SOMEHOW, THESE TWO SHARE A PRIMAL SUB-CONSCIOUS AWARENESS OF EACH OTHER-- LIKE IDENTICAL TWINS.
I'M PROJECTING WHAT SHE'S RECEIVING, FOR YOU TO SEE.

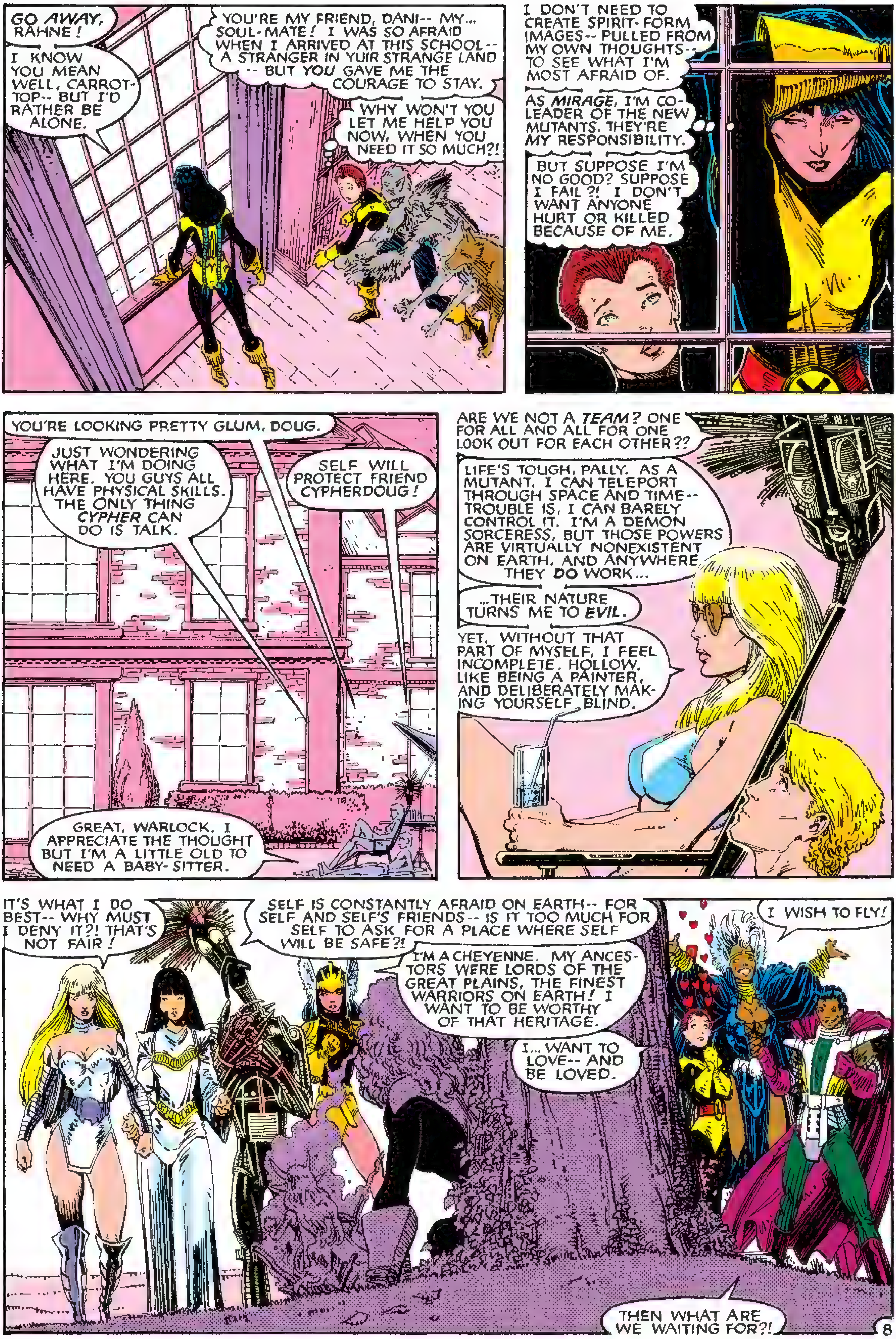


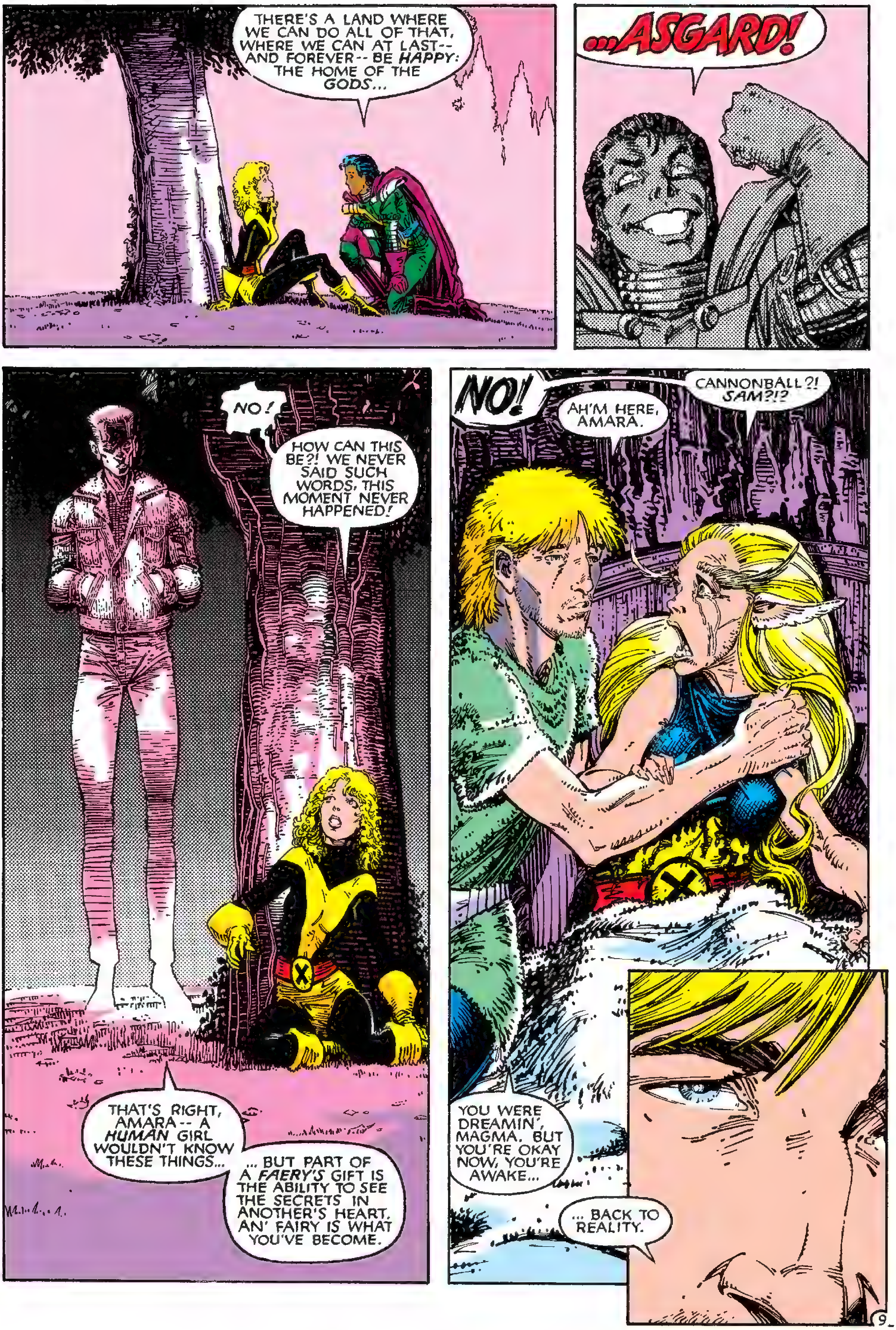

WHAT THE DEVIL--?!?
SCOTT, COULD THAT BLACK WOMAN BE *STORM*?!
ILLYANA NIKOLOVNA-- WHAT HAS HAPPENED TO YOU?!
THAT'S HER *DARKCHILDE* INCARNATION, ISN'T IT? THE PART OF HER THAT'S PURE DEMON SORCERESS?
BUT AH THOUGHT SHE COULDN'T WORK MAGIC ON EARTH.
BY THE SAME TOKEN, ROGUE, STORM--HAVING LOST HER POWERS-- SHOULDN'T BE ABLE TO FLY. YET THERE SHE IS-- AND HURLING BOLTS OF LIGHTNING AS WELL.
THIS COULD BE A NIGHTMARE, X-MEN-- OR SOMETHING FAR MORE OMINOUS. WE'D BETTER FIND OUT WHICH!
AN HOUR LATER, STILL IN KITTY'S AND ILLYANA'S BEDROOM...
STORM AND THE *NEW MUTANTS* WERE VACATIONING ON THE GREEK ISLE OF *KIRINOS*. A FREAK GALE HAS EVIDENTLY CUT OFF ALL CONTACT TO THE ISLAND-- NO PHONE, NO RADIO, AND NEITHER BOATS NOR PLANES CAN GET NEAR THE PLACE.
COINCIDENCE, *TOVARISCH*?
HAH!
HOW YOU DOIN', KITTY?
DON'T ASK.
WISH AH COULD HELP. AH WANT'A OFFER MY SHOULDER TO CRY ON, LIKE MADELYNE'S DOING-- BUT AH DON'T DARE RISK KITTY, OR ANYONE, TOUCHIN' MY BARE SKIN. 'CAUSE IF THEY DO, AH'LL STEAL THEIR MINDS AND POWERS.
Y'KNOW, CYCLOPS-- STORM'S OUTFIT, AN' THAT HAMMER SHE WAS SWINGIN', REMIND ME OF PICTURES AH'VE SEEN OF *THOR* AN' THOSE ASGARD FOLKS.
REMEMBER WHAT *LOKI* SAID WHEN WE BEAT HIM LAST WINTER. HE PAYS HIS DEBTS.
ONLY A MATTER OF TIME BEFORE HE SETTLED THE SCORE. I GUESS HE JUST MADE HIS MOVE.
AREN'T YOU JUMPING TO CONCLUSIONS, WOLVERINE? LOKI SWORE NEVER TO DO US ANY HARM.
HE ISN'T CALLED THE *GREAT TRICKSTER*-- THE NORSE *GOD OF MISCHIEF*-- FOR NOTHING, MADELYNE.
IF ANYONE CAN FIND A LOOPHOLE IN A PROMISE, IT'S HIM.
KITTY'S RIGHT! THOSE IMAGES WERE A DESPERATE PSYCHIC "S.O.S." AND EVERY INSTINCT I HAVE TELLS ME *ASGARD* IS WHERE IT CAME FROM!
FIGURES THAT SLIME-BUCKET WOULD TRY TO HURT US THROUGH THE MUTANTS. THEY'RE JUST KIDS-- NO MATCH FOR HIM.
XAVIER'S SCHOOL LOOKS AFTER ITS OWN. IF THE NEW MUTANTS ARE IN DANGER, IT'S THE *X-MEN'S* JOB TO GO TO THE *RESCUE!*

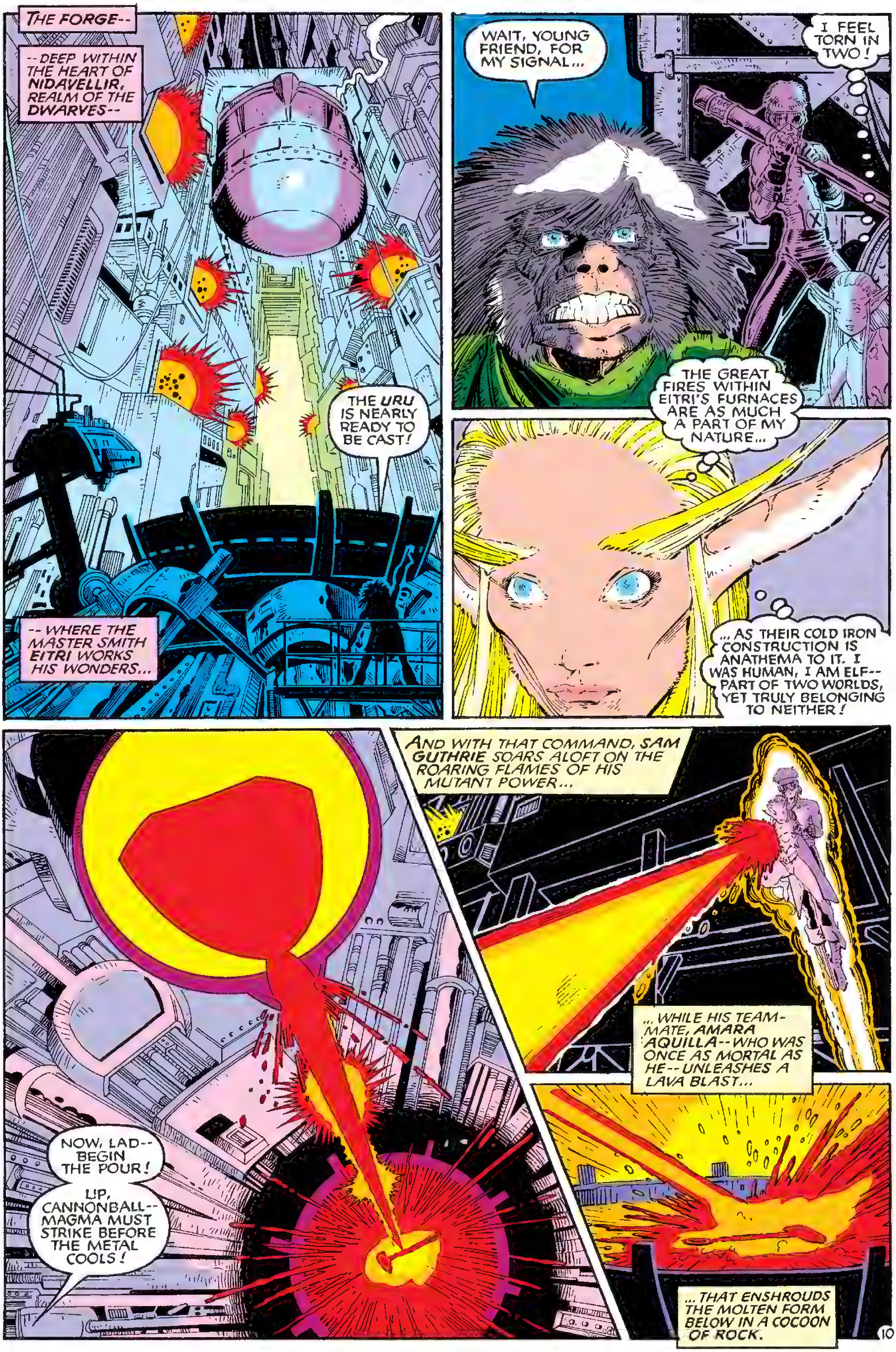

AND SO...
NO LUCK, CYCLOPS-- NEAR AS I CAN DETERMINE, THOR IS IN ASGARD. IF WE WANT THE GOD OF THUNDER'S AID, WE'LL HAVE TO GET IT THERE.
SO WHO SAYS WE NEED HIM, CHUM? WE'RE A PRETTY HOT ACT ON OUR OWN.
DON'T GET COCKY, ROGUE. YOU MAY NOT BE THE ONE WHO PAYS THE PRICE.
MADELYNE, PROFESSOR XAVIER'S IN ENGLAND.
TELL HIM WHAT WE'VE DONE AND WHERE WE'VE GONE. IN MY OPINION, THE MUTANTS' SITUATION IS DESPERATE-- WE CAN'T WAIT TO CHECK WITH HIM FIRST. I HATE LEAVING, WITH THE BABY ALMOST DUE...
I UNDERSTAND. THOSE KIDS ARE COUNTING ON YOU. DON'T WORRY, SCOTT, I'LL BE ALL RIGHT-- BUT HOW WILL YOU GET TO ASGARD?!
THESE LIGHTNING BOLTS...
...WERE CREATED BY ARKON THE IMPERION TO TELEPORT HIMSELF BETWEEN DIMENSIONS. HE TAUGHT ME HOW TO USE THEM. THE RIGHT COMBINATION SHOULD TAKE US TO ASGARD.
AN' THE WRONG COMBINATION-- ?
WHERE'LL THAT TAKE US, SUGAR?
DON'T LET ROGUE RATTLE YOU, HON. WE'LL BE FINE--
-- AND HOME WITH THE KIDS, SAFE AND SOUND, BEFORE YOU KNOW IT.
READY, X-MEN?
WAITIN' ON RACHEL-- OBOY!?!
ACH DU LEIBER--?!!
CUTE, KIDDO-- REAL CUTE.
Gasp!
RACHEL, HOW COULD YOU--?!?
BY THE WHITE WOLF--!

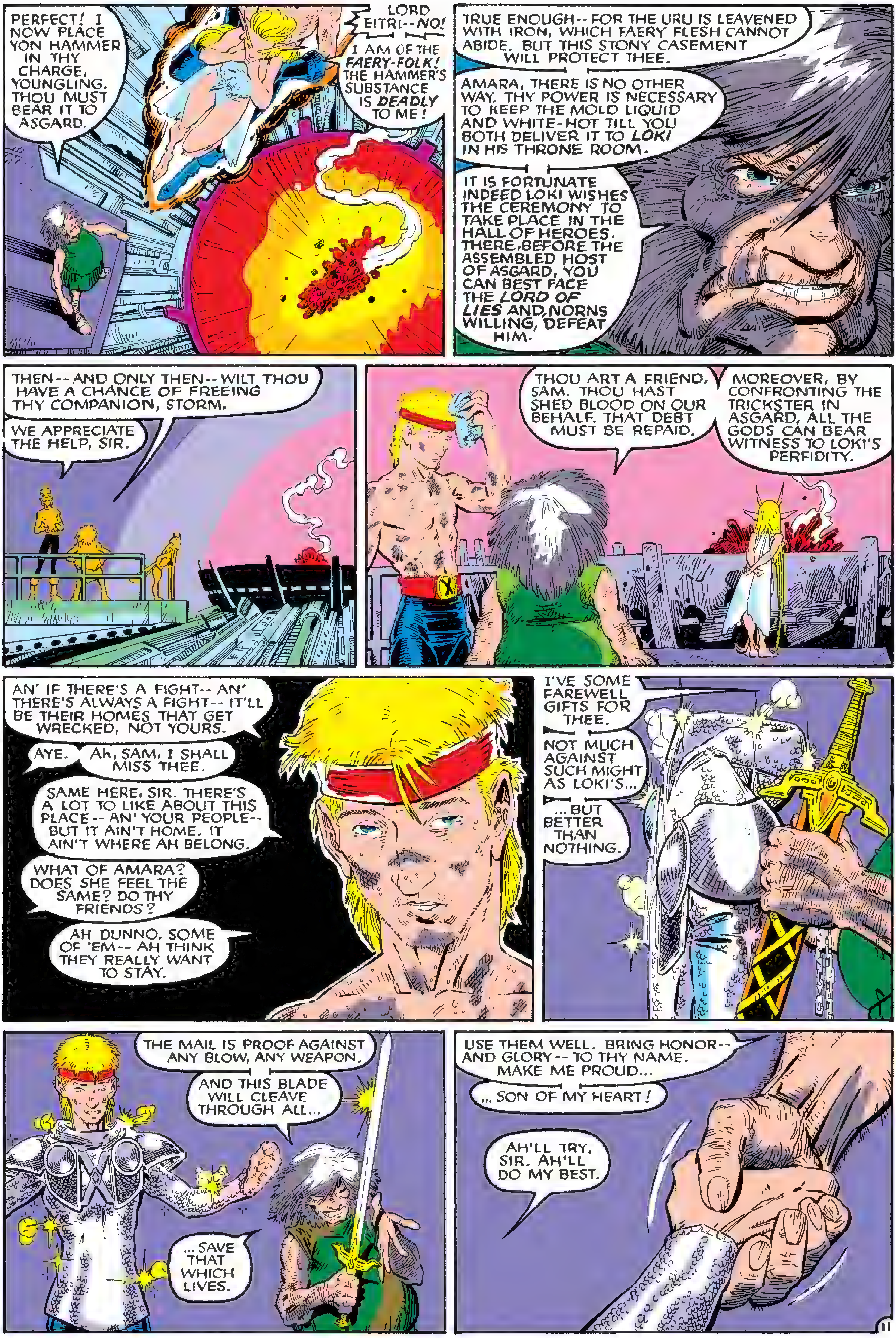

HEY, GUYS-- WHAT GIVES?
YOU LOOK LIKE YOU'VE JUST SEEN A GHOST!
I GOT TIRED OF RUNNING AROUND IN DANSKINS. I FIGURED, IF I'M PART OF THE TEAM, I OUGHT TO HAVE A COSTUME.
BUT WHY... BUT WHY *THAT* COSTUME?! THAT DESIGN?!!
WHY NOT?
YOUR STYLIZED BIRD IMAGE, IT'S THE SAME AS THE *PHOENIX* SYMBOL WORN BY *JEAN GREY*. I'D APPRECIATE YOUR WEARING SOMETHING DIFFERENT.
THE OUTFIT AND THE NAME, CYCLOPS. I MEAN TO KEEP THEM BOTH.
I'M SORRY IT UPSETS YOU-- BUT IT'S ALSO NONE OF YOUR CONCERN. YOU'RE MARRIED, REMEMBER? YOU MAY BE LEADING THIS MISSION, BUT YOU'RE RETIRED FROM THE X-MEN.
SHE'S RIGHT, SCOTT...
...ISN'T SHE?
SURE.
EXCUSE ME, MADELYNE-- WOULD YOU LOOK AFTER *LOCKHEED* WHILE I'M AWAY? HE WON'T BE ANY TROUBLE, I PROMISE!
CAPER'S OFF TO A ROCKY START. AN' I GOT A NASTY FEELING...
...IT'S GONNA GET WORSE.
RAY-- HOW COULD YOU BE SO DUMB? YOU *KNOW* JEAN WAS CYCLOPS' FIRST LOVE. IN YOUR TIMELINE, THEY WERE YOUR PARENTS, BUT IN THIS ONE, SHE DIED.
SCOTT MARRIED MADELYNE-- THEY'RE GOING TO HAVE A BABY.
ARE YOU DELIBERATELY TRYING TO HURT HIM?!?
GOOD-BYE, SCOTT!
Oh, LORD-- WHY ALL OF A SUDDEN AM I SO AFRAID I'LL NEVER SEE HIM...
... WE'LL NEVER BE HAPPY TOGETHER, EVER AGAIN?!


PROFESSOR XAVIER'S SCHOOL FOR GIFTED YOUNGSTERS.
EACH OF ITS STUDENTS-- IN BOTH THE SENIOR TEAM, THE X-MEN, AND THE NOVICE NEW MUTANTS-- IS UNIQUE. THEY ARE MUTANTS-- BORN WITH EXTRAORDINARY PHYSICAL OR MENTAL ABILITIES WHICH SET THEM APART FROM THE NORMAL RUN OF HUMANITY. THAT MAKES THEM SPECIAL...
...BUT IT ALSO MAKES THEM OUTCASTS.
MAGMA--AS HER NAME IMPLIES --COMMANDS THE MOLTEN ESSENCE OF THE EARTH ITSELF.
SHE CAN HURL LAVA BLASTS AT A FOE, OR SHAPE THAT MOLTEN ROCK INTO ANY FORM SHE CHOOSES.
EXCELLENT, AMARA. YOUR CONTROL IS IMPROVING.
THAT IS A LOVELY PIECE OF WORK.
THANK YOU, STORM. MY REVERED FATHER USED TO TELL ME BEDTIME STORIES OF THE FAERY FOLK. I ALWAYS WISHED I COULD MEET THEM.
IT IS SAD THAT-- IN THIS HARSH, CRUEL WORLD OF OURS-- THEY NO LONGER EXIST.
NEARBY, SUNSPOT AND CANNONBALL PRACTICE THE USE OF THEIR OWN TALENTS.
STORM MAKES A PRETTY GOOD TEACHER, eh, BOBBY?
I WONDER IF IT HURTS HER, HANGIN' AROUND THE NEW MUTANTS, WHEN SHE DOESN'T HAVE POWERS OF HER OWN ANYMORE. DO WE REMIND HER OF WHAT SHE WAS?! THAT'S GOTTA BE ROUGH, PAL.
I SUPPOSE. ME, I CAN'T HELP THINKING THE SAME THING COULD HAPPEN TO ME.
MUTANTS ARE MORE AND MORE HATED WITH EVERY PASSING DAY, CANNONBALL. NOTHING WE SAY OR DO TO CHANGE THAT SEEMS TO MAKE ANY DIFFERENCE.
SOMETIMES, MY FRIEND, I THINK I WOULD TRADE EVERYTHING I HAVE FOR A PLACE AND A LIFE WHERE I'M ACCEPTED FOR WHAT I AM.


GO AWAY, RAHNE!
I KNOW YOU MEAN WELL, CARROT-TOP-- BUT I'D RATHER BE ALONE.
YOU'RE MY FRIEND, DANI-- MY... SOUL-MATE! I WAS SO AFRAID WHEN I ARRIVED AT THIS SCHOOL-- A STRANGER IN YUIR STRANGE LAND -- BUT YOU GAVE ME THE COURAGE TO STAY.
WHY WON'T YOU LET ME HELP YOU NOW, WHEN YOU NEED IT SO MUCH?!
I DON'T NEED TO CREATE SPIRIT-FORM IMAGES-- PULLED FROM MY OWN THOUGHTS-- TO SEE WHAT I'M MOST AFRAID OF.
AS MIRAGE, I'M CO-LEADER OF THE NEW MUTANTS. THEY'RE MY RESPONSIBILITY.
BUT SUPPOSE I'M NO GOOD? SUPPOSE I FAIL?! I DON'T WANT ANYONE HURT OR KILLED BECAUSE OF ME.
YOU'RE LOOKING PRETTY GLUM, DOUG.
JUST WONDERING WHAT I'M DOING HERE. YOU GUYS ALL HAVE PHYSICAL SKILLS. THE ONLY THING CYPHER CAN DO IS TALK.
SELF WILL PROTECT FRIEND CYPHERDOUG!
GREAT, WARLOCK. I APPRECIATE THE THOUGHT BUT I'M A LITTLE OLD TO NEED A BABY-SITTER.
ARE WE NOT A TEAM? ONE FOR ALL AND ALL FOR ONE LOOK OUT FOR EACH OTHER??
LIFE'S TOUGH, PALLY. AS A MUTANT, I CAN TELEPORT THROUGH SPACE AND TIME-- TROUBLE IS, I CAN BARELY CONTROL IT. I'M A DEMON SORCERESS, BUT THOSE POWERS ARE VIRTUALLY NONEXISTENT ON EARTH, AND ANYWHERE THEY DO WORK...
...THEIR NATURE TURNS ME TO EVIL.
YET, WITHOUT THAT PART OF MYSELF, I FEEL INCOMPLETE. HOLLOW. LIKE BEING A PAINTER, AND DELIBERATELY MAKING YOURSELF BLIND.
IT'S WHAT I DO BEST-- WHY MUST I DENY IT?! THAT'S NOT FAIR!
SELF IS CONSTANTLY AFRAID ON EARTH-- FOR SELF AND SELF'S FRIENDS-- IS IT TOO MUCH FOR SELF TO ASK FOR A PLACE WHERE SELF WILL BE SAFE?!
I'M A CHEYENNE. MY ANCESTORS WERE LORDS OF THE GREAT PLAINS, THE FINEST WARRIORS ON EARTH! I WANT TO BE WORTHY OF THAT HERITAGE.
I... WANT TO LOVE-- AND BE LOVED.
I WISH TO FLY!
THEN WHAT ARE WE WAITING FOR?!


THERE'S A LAND WHERE WE CAN DO ALL OF THAT, WHERE WE CAN AT LAST-- AND FOREVER-- BE *HAPPY*: THE HOME OF THE *GODS*...
...ASGARD!
NO!
HOW CAN THIS BE?! WE NEVER SAID SUCH WORDS, THIS MOMENT NEVER HAPPENED!
THAT'S RIGHT, AMARA-- A *HUMAN* GIRL WOULDN'T KNOW THESE THINGS...
... BUT PART OF A *FAERY'S* GIFT IS THE ABILITY TO SEE THE SECRETS IN ANOTHER'S HEART, AN' FAIRY IS WHAT YOU'VE BECOME.
NO!
AH'M HERE, AMARA.
CANNONBALL?! *SAM?!?*
YOU WERE DREAMIN', MAGMA. BUT YOU'RE OKAY NOW, YOU'RE AWAKE...
... BACK TO REALITY.


THE FORGE--
--DEEP WITHIN THE HEART OF NIDAVELLIR, REALM OF THE DWARVES--
THE URU IS NEARLY READY TO BE CAST!
--WHERE THE MASTER SMITH EITRI WORKS HIS WONDERS...
WAIT, YOUNG FRIEND, FOR MY SIGNAL...
I FEEL TORN IN TWO!
THE GREAT FIRES WITHIN EITRI'S FURNACES ARE AS MUCH A PART OF MY NATURE...
...AS THEIR COLD IRON CONSTRUCTION IS ANATHEMA TO IT. I WAS HUMAN, I AM ELF--PART OF TWO WORLDS, YET TRULY BELONGING TO NEITHER!
NOW, LAD--BEGIN THE POUR!
UP, CANNONBALL--MAGMA MUST STRIKE BEFORE THE METAL COOLS!
AND WITH THAT COMMAND, SAM GUTHRIE SOARS ALOFT ON THE ROARING FLAMES OF HIS MUTANT POWER...
...WHILE HIS TEAM-MATE, AMARA AQUILLA--WHO WAS ONCE AS MORTAL AS HE--UNLEASHES A LAVA BLAST...
...THAT ENSHROUDS THE MOLTEN FORM BELOW IN A COCOON OF ROCK.


PERFECT! I NOW PLACE YON HAMMER IN THY CHARGE, YOUNGLING. THOU MUST BEAR IT TO ASGARD.
LORD EITRI--NO!
I AM OF THE FAERY-FOLK! THE HAMMER'S SUBSTANCE IS DEADLY TO ME!
TRUE ENOUGH--FOR THE URU IS LEAVENED WITH IRON, WHICH FAERY FLESH CANNOT ABIDE. BUT THIS STONY CASEMENT WILL PROTECT THEE.
AMARA, THERE IS NO OTHER WAY. THY POWER IS NECESSARY TO KEEP THE MOLD LIQUID AND WHITE-HOT TILL YOU BOTH DELIVER IT TO LOKI IN HIS THRONE ROOM.
IT IS FORTUNATE INDEED LOKI WISHES THE CEREMONY TO TAKE PLACE IN THE HALL OF HEROES. THERE, BEFORE THE ASSEMBLED HOST OF ASGARD, YOU CAN BEST FACE THE LORD OF LIES AND, NORNS WILLING, DEFEAT HIM.
THEN--AND ONLY THEN--WILT THOU HAVE A CHANCE OF FREEING THY COMPANION, STORM.
WE APPRECIATE THE HELP, SIR.
THOU ART A FRIEND, SAM. THOU HAST SHED BLOOD ON OUR BEHALF. THAT DEBT MUST BE REPAID.
MOREOVER, BY CONFRONTING THE TRICKSTER IN ASGARD, ALL THE GODS CAN BEAR WITNESS TO LOKI'S PERFIDITY.
AN' IF THERE'S A FIGHT--AN' THERE'S ALWAYS A FIGHT--IT'LL BE THEIR HOMES THAT GET WRECKED, NOT YOURS.
AYE.
AH, SAM, I SHALL MISS THEE.
SAME HERE, SIR. THERE'S A LOT TO LIKE ABOUT THIS PLACE--AN' YOUR PEOPLE--BUT IT AIN'T HOME. IT AIN'T WHERE AH BELONG.
WHAT OF AMARA? DOES SHE FEEL THE SAME? DO THY FRIENDS?
AH DUNNO. SOME OF 'EM--AH THINK THEY REALLY WANT TO STAY.
I'VE SOME FAREWELL GIFTS FOR THEE.
NOT MUCH AGAINST SUCH MIGHT AS LOKI'S...
...BUT BETTER THAN NOTHING.
THE MAIL IS PROOF AGAINST ANY BLOW, ANY WEAPON.
AND THIS BLADE WILL CLEAVE THROUGH ALL...
...SAVE THAT WHICH LIVES.
USE THEM WELL. BRING HONOR--AND GLORY--TO THY NAME. MAKE ME PROUD...
...SON OF MY HEART!
AH'LL TRY, SIR. AH'LL DO MY BEST.

ELSEWHERE IN THE GOLDEN REALM...
SOME RIDE.
SOME LANDING!
THANK GOODNESS! THE TRANSITION WAS SO ROUGH, I WAS AFRAID WE WOULDN'T MAKE IT!
YOU SURE THIS IS THE RIGHT PLACE, SUGAR? IF IT'S ASGARD...
...AH AIN'T IMPRESSED.
SCENTS AN' SOUNDS NEARBY, TROOPS--
--HUNTERS... AN' BLOOD!
A WOLF!
IT COULD BE RAHNE!
AIN'T LIKELY, DARLIN'-- THAT'S A BOY.
BUT THERE'S NO WAY I'M LEAVIN' ANY ANIMAL TO BE BUTCHERED--
--'SPECIALLY BY THE LIKES OF *THEM!*
WOLVERINE, HOLD OFF-- WE DON'T KNOW-- oh, BLAZES!
BAMF
SNIKT!
SNIKT
AFTER HIM, X-MEN! AND REMEMBER, WE NEED INFORMATION, NOT A BODY COUNT!
WHO ARE THESE CREATURES?!
FROM ALL AH'VE READ, COLOSSUS--
--AH'D SAY THEY'RE *TROLLS*.
SPOW!
WAK!
RZAM!
POOR THING.
HE'S ALIVE, WOLVIE-- BUT HE'S HURT AWFUL BAD!
ZARK!

DO NOT... FEAR, MILADY.
UNGLAUBLICH!
MINE... IS A HARDY BREED.
GOLLY-- A SHAPE-CHANGER!
Uh-oh! WE GOT COMPANY.
WHAT A PITY.
I CAME IN SEARCH OF A WOLFEN PRINCE'S SOUL.
BUT IT APPEARS, THANKS TO YOU MORTALS...
...HELA MUST NEEDS CONTENT HERSELF WITH THIS PALTRY BAND OF TROLLS.
BEWARE, FRIENDS! THAT BE THE GODDESS OF DEATH!
Gasp!
I BID THEE WELCOME TO THE GOLDEN REALM, PALADINS.
ESPECIALLY THEE, STARSOUL FIREHAIR. THY PEDIGREE IS WRITTEN ON THY FACE-- THOU'RT IN TRUTH MUCH LIKE THY DAM.
YOU... KNEW MY MOM?
YEA, VERILY! WE WERE THE BITTEREST OF FOES, YET IN HER TIME SHE SENT MORE SOULS UNTO ME THAN ANY WHO PROFESSED TO SERVE MY CAUSE.
THAT WASN'T HER FAULT!
THE "WHY" MATTERS NOT...
...ONLY THE DEED ITSELF.
GLAD I AM TO KNOW THEE, CHILD OF LIGHT AND DARKNESS.
MAYEST THOU BE ALL THY MOTHER WAS...
...AND MORE!
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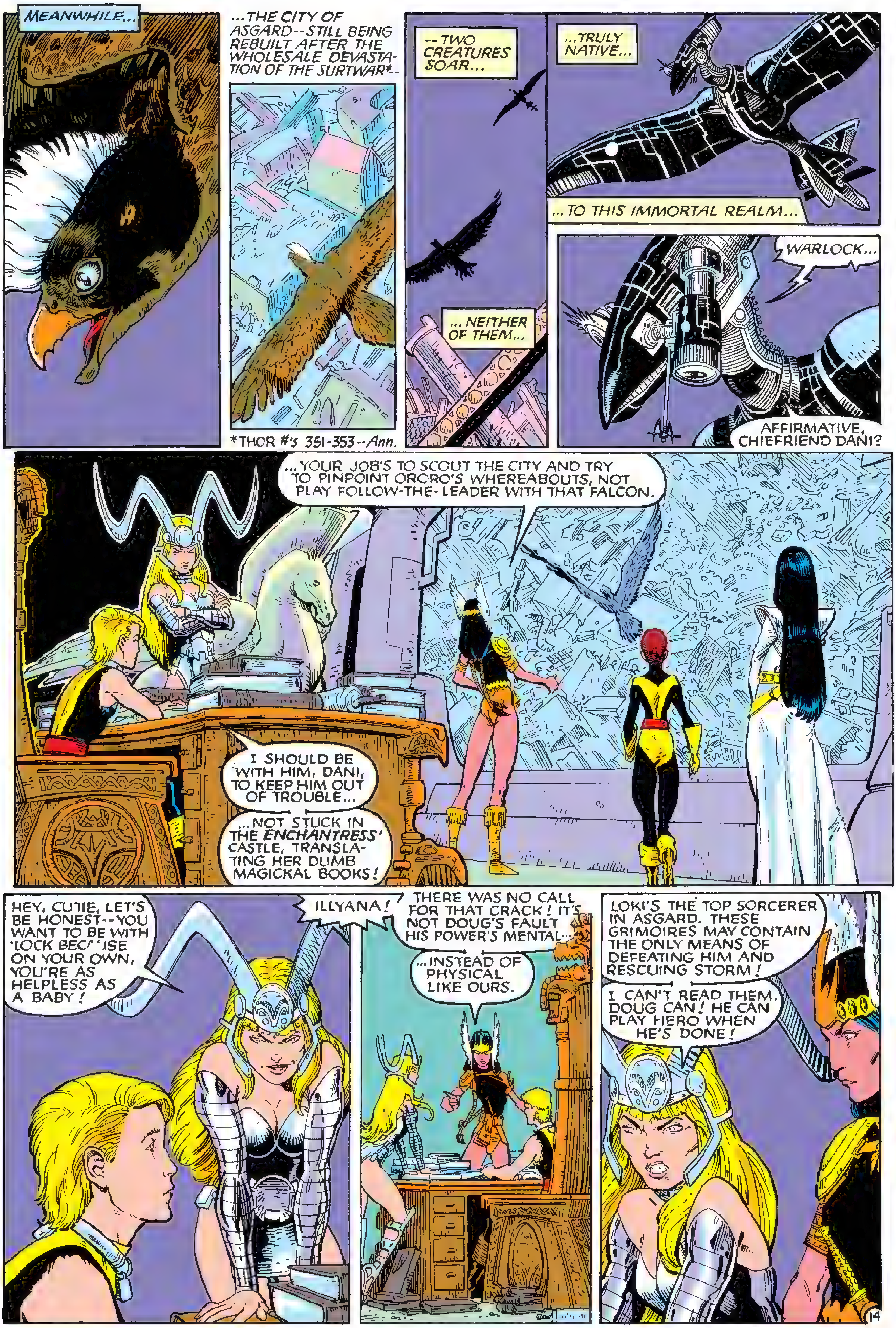
MEANWHILE...
...THE CITY OF ASGARD--STILL BEING REBUILT AFTER THE WHOLESALE DEVASTATION OF THE SURTWAR*--
*THOR #'s 351-353--Ann.
--TWO CREATURES SOAR...
...NEITHER OF THEM...
...TRULY NATIVE...
...TO THIS IMMORTAL REALM...
WARLOCK...
AFFIRMATIVE, CHIEFRIEND DANI?
...YOUR JOB'S TO SCOUT THE CITY AND TRY TO PINPOINT ORORO'S WHEREABOUTS, NOT PLAY FOLLOW-THE-LEADER WITH THAT FALCON.
I SHOULD BE WITH HIM, DANI, TO KEEP HIM OUT OF TROUBLE...
...NOT STUCK IN THE ENCHANTRESS' CASTLE, TRANSLATING HER DUMB MAGICKAL BOOKS!
HEY, CUTIE, LET'S BE HONEST--YOU WANT TO BE WITH 'LOCK BECAUSE ON YOUR OWN, YOU'RE AS HELPLESS AS A BABY!
ILLYANA!
THERE WAS NO CALL FOR THAT CRACK! IT'S NOT DOUG'S FAULT HIS POWER'S MENTAL...
...INSTEAD OF PHYSICAL LIKE OURS.
LOKI'S THE TOP SORCERER IN ASGARD. THESE GRIMOIRES MAY CONTAIN THE ONLY MEANS OF DEFEATING HIM AND RESCUING STORM!
I CAN'T READ THEM. DOUG CAN! HE CAN PLAY HERO WHEN HE'S DONE!
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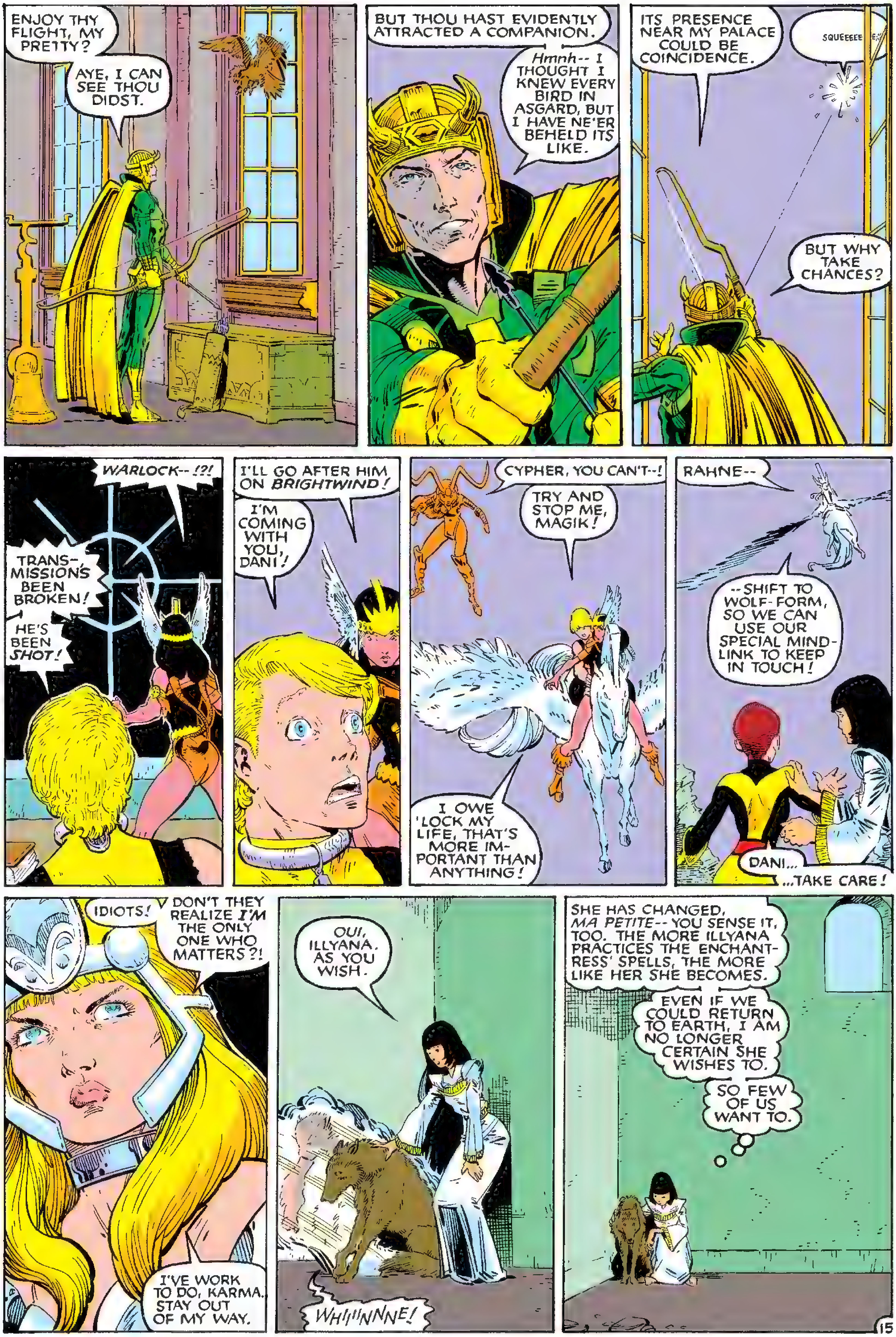
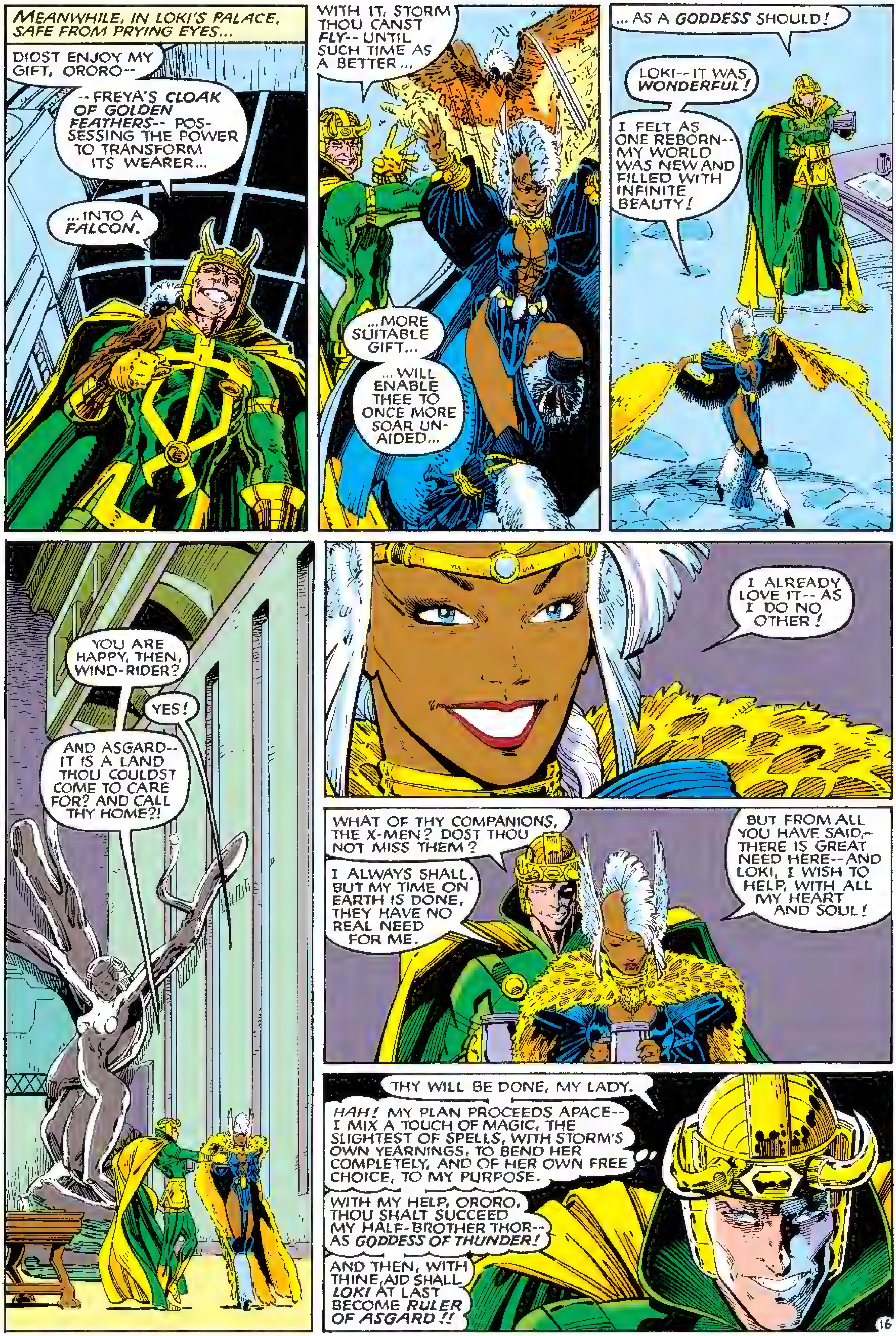
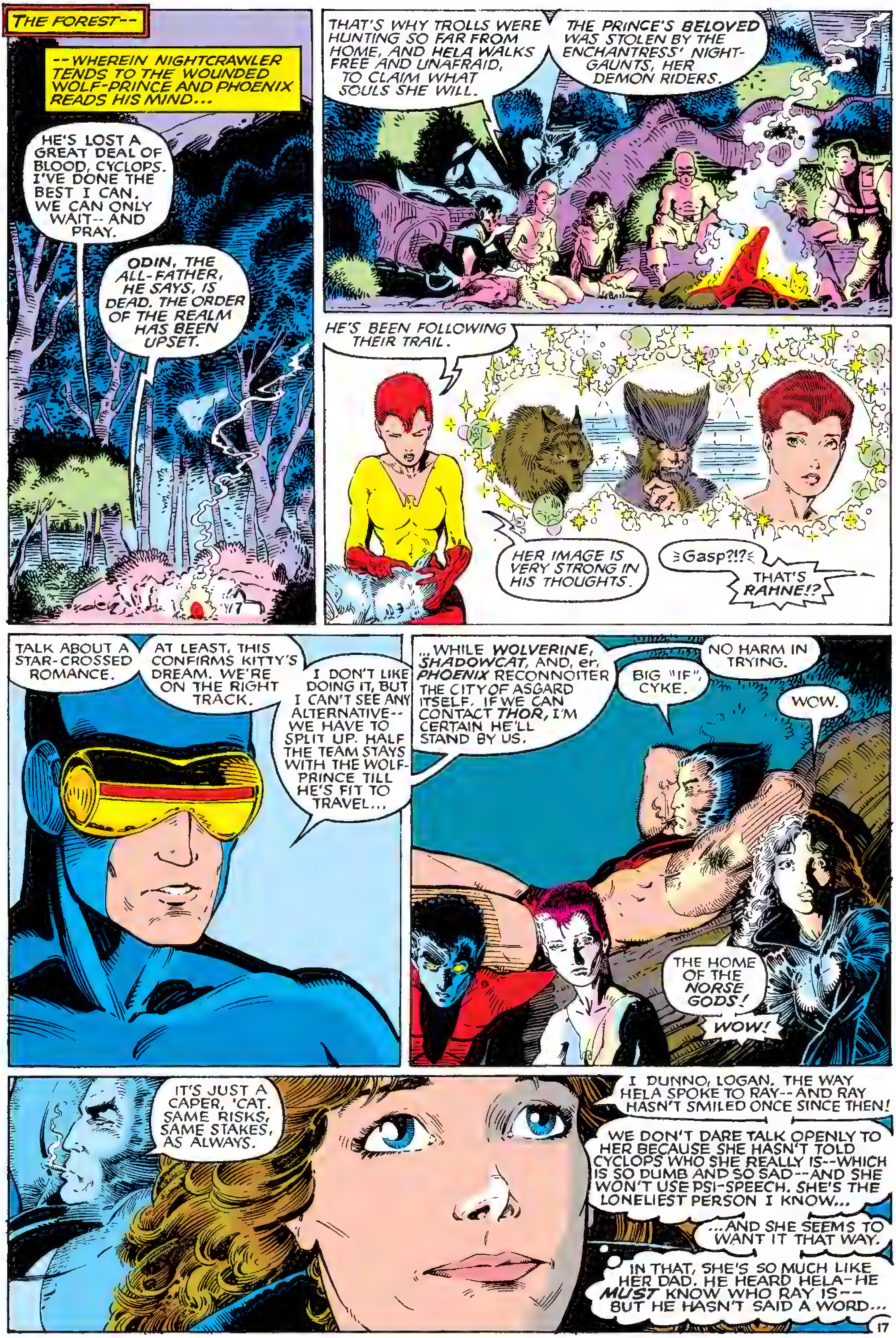
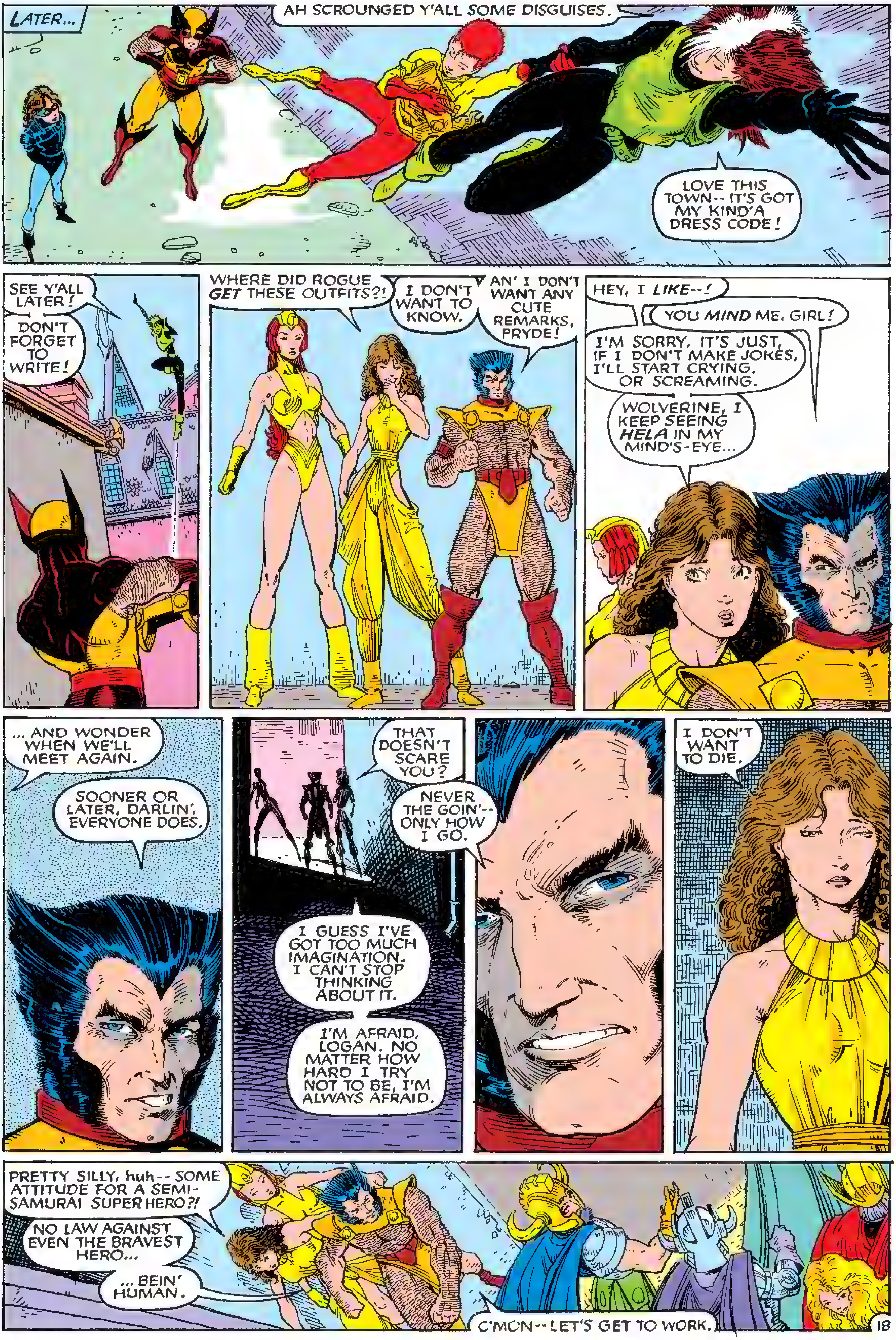
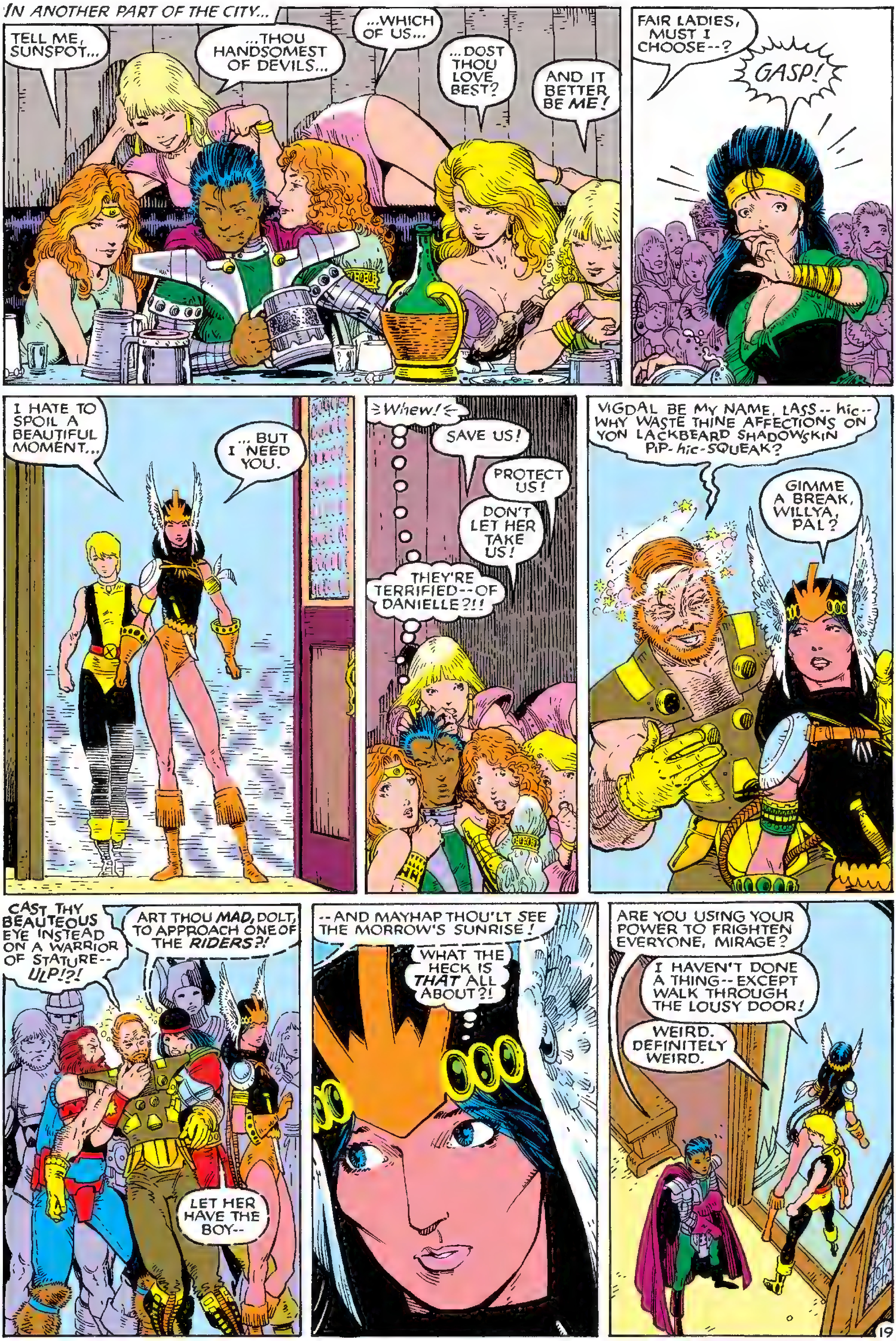
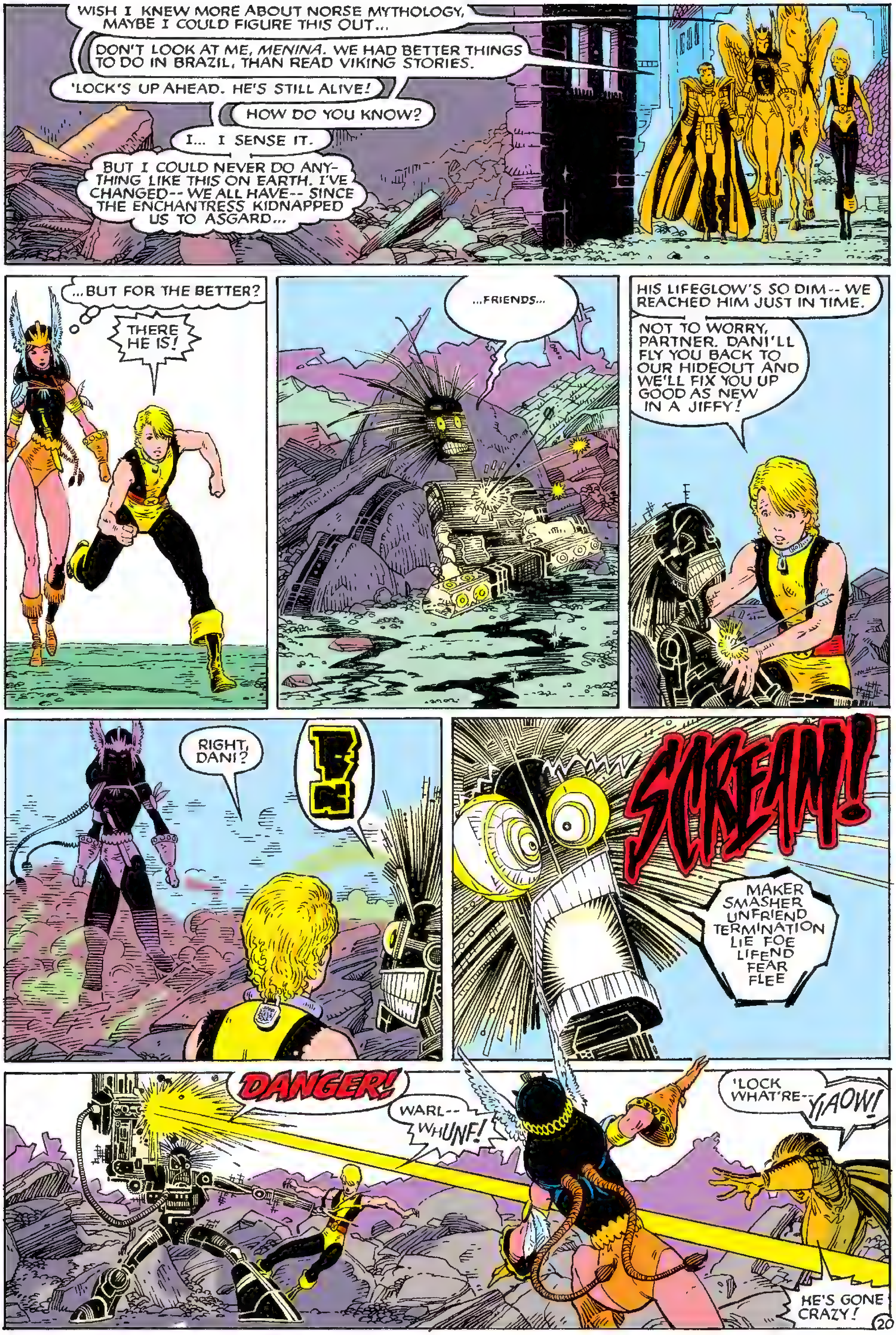

ENJOY THY FLIGHT, MY PRETTY?
AYE, I CAN SEE THOU DIDST.
BUT THOU HAST EVIDENTLY ATTRACTED A COMPANION.
Hmnh-- I THOUGHT I KNEW EVERY BIRD IN ASGARD, BUT I HAVE NE'ER BEHELD ITS LIKE.
ITS PRESENCE NEAR MY PALACE COULD BE COINCIDENCE.
SQUEEEEEE-E
BUT WHY TAKE CHANCES?
WARLOCK-- !?!
TRANS-MISSION'S BEEN BROKEN!
HE'S BEEN SHOT!
I'LL GO AFTER HIM ON BRIGHTWIND!
I'M COMING WITH YOU, DANI!
CYPHER, YOU CAN'T--!
TRY AND STOP ME, MAGIK!
I OWE 'LOCK MY LIFE, THAT'S MORE IMPORTANT THAN ANYTHING!
RAHNE--
--SHIFT TO WOLF-FORM, SO WE CAN USE OUR SPECIAL MIND-LINK TO KEEP IN TOUCH!
DANI...
...TAKE CARE!
IDIOTS!
DON'T THEY REALIZE I'M THE ONLY ONE WHO MATTERS?!
I'VE WORK TO DO, KARMA. STAY OUT OF MY WAY.
OUI, ILLYANA. AS YOU WISH.
WHIIINNNE!
SHE HAS CHANGED, MA PETITE-- YOU SENSE IT, TOO. THE MORE ILLYANA PRACTICES THE ENCHANTRESS' SPELLS, THE MORE LIKE HER SHE BECOMES.
EVEN IF WE COULD RETURN TO EARTH, I AM NO LONGER CERTAIN SHE WISHES TO.
SO FEW OF US WANT TO.

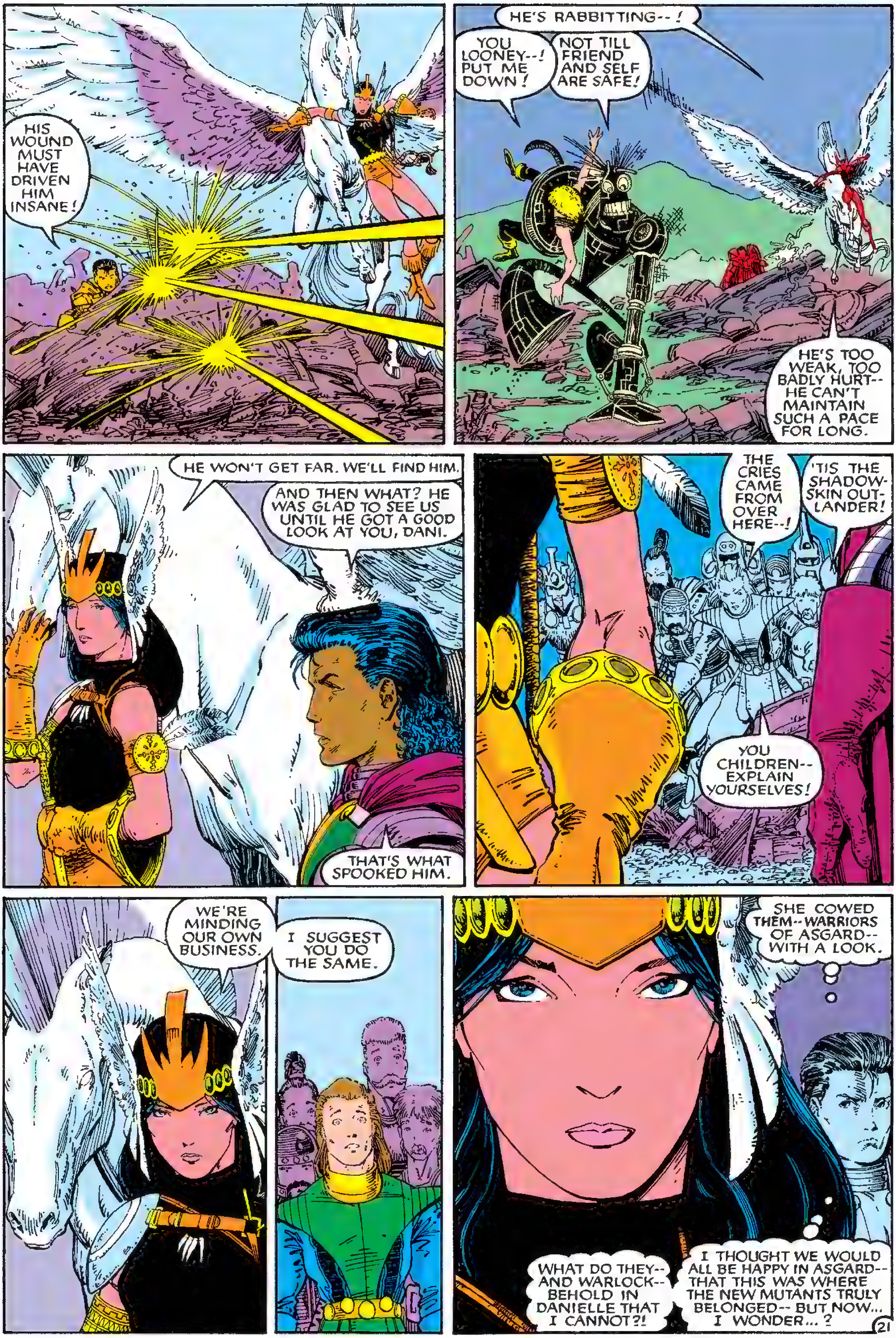

MEANWHILE, IN LOKI'S PALACE, SAFE FROM PRYING EYES...
DIDST ENJOY MY GIFT, ORORO--
--FREYA'S CLOAK OF GOLDEN FEATHERS-- POSSESSING THE POWER TO TRANSFORM ITS WEARER...
...INTO A FALCON.
WITH IT, STORM THOU CANST FLY-- UNTIL SUCH TIME AS A BETTER...
...MORE SUITABLE GIFT...
...WILL ENABLE THEE TO ONCE MORE SOAR UNAIDED...
...AS A GODDESS SHOULD!
LOKI-- IT WAS WONDERFUL!
I FELT AS ONE REBORN-- MY WORLD WAS NEW AND FILLED WITH INFINITE BEAUTY!
YOU ARE HAPPY, THEN, WIND-RIDER?
YES!
AND ASGARD-- IT IS A LAND THOU COULDST COME TO CARE FOR? AND CALL THY HOME?!
I ALREADY LOVE IT-- AS I DO NO OTHER!
WHAT OF THY COMPANIONS, THE X-MEN? DOST THOU NOT MISS THEM?
I ALWAYS SHALL. BUT MY TIME ON EARTH IS DONE. THEY HAVE NO REAL NEED FOR ME.
BUT FROM ALL YOU HAVE SAID,-- THERE IS GREAT NEED HERE-- AND LOKI, I WISH TO HELP, WITH ALL MY HEART AND SOUL!
THY WILL BE DONE, MY LADY.
HAH! MY PLAN PROCEEDS APACE-- I MIX A TOUCH OF MAGIC, THE SLIGHTEST OF SPELLS, WITH STORM'S OWN YEARNINGS, TO BEND HER COMPLETELY, AND OF HER OWN FREE CHOICE, TO MY PURPOSE.
WITH MY HELP, ORORO, THOU SHALT SUCCEED MY HALF-BROTHER THOR-- AS GODDESS OF THUNDER!
AND THEN, WITH THINE AID SHALL LOKI AT LAST BECOME RULER OF ASGARD!!

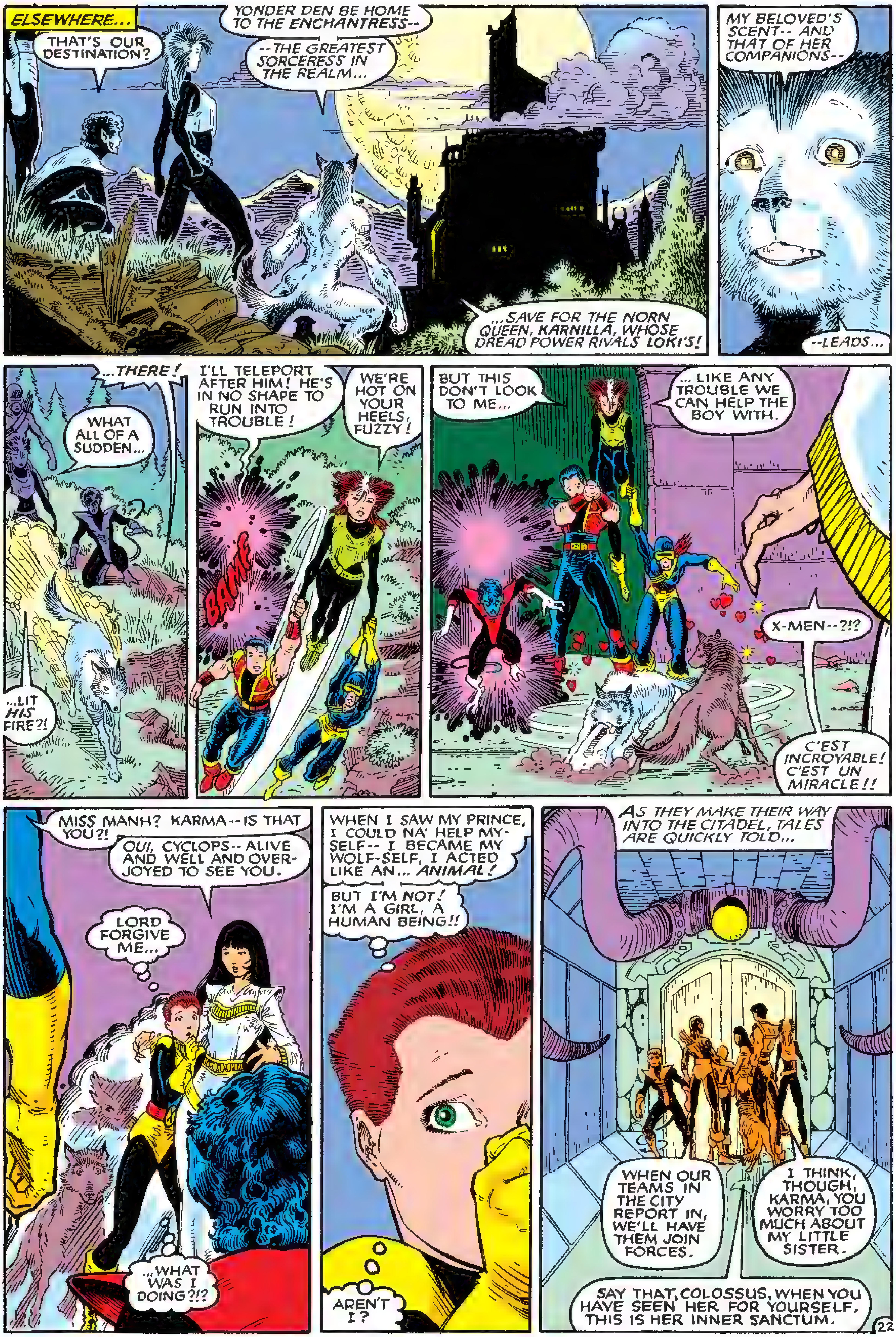

THE FOREST--
--WHEREIN NIGHTCRAWLER TENDS TO THE WOUNDED WOLF-PRINCE AND PHOENIX READS HIS MIND...
HE'S LOST A GREAT DEAL OF BLOOD, CYCLOPS. I'VE DONE THE BEST I CAN. WE CAN ONLY WAIT-- AND PRAY.
ODIN, THE ALL-FATHER, HE SAYS, IS DEAD. THE ORDER OF THE REALM HAS BEEN UPSET.
THAT'S WHY TROLLS WERE HUNTING SO FAR FROM HOME, AND HELA WALKS FREE AND UNAFRAID, TO CLAIM WHAT SOULS SHE WILL.
THE PRINCE'S BELOVED WAS STOLEN BY THE ENCHANTRESS' NIGHT-GAUNTS, HER DEMON RIDERS.
HE'S BEEN FOLLOWING THEIR TRAIL.
HER IMAGE IS VERY STRONG IN HIS THOUGHTS.
Gasp?!?
THAT'S RAHNE!?
TALK ABOUT A STAR-CROSSED ROMANCE.
AT LEAST, THIS CONFIRMS KITTY'S DREAM. WE'RE ON THE RIGHT TRACK.
I DON'T LIKE DOING IT, BUT I CAN'T SEE ANY ALTERNATIVE-- WE HAVE TO SPLIT UP. HALF THE TEAM STAYS WITH THE WOLF-PRINCE TILL HE'S FIT TO TRAVEL...
...WHILE WOLVERINE, SHADOWCAT, AND, er, PHOENIX RECONNOITER THE CITY OF ASGARD ITSELF. IF WE CAN CONTACT THOR, I'M CERTAIN HE'LL STAND BY US.
BIG "IF," CYKE.
NO HARM IN TRYING.
WOW.
THE HOME OF THE NORSE GODS!
WOW!
IT'S JUST A CAPER, 'CAT. SAME RISKS, SAME STAKES, AS ALWAYS.
I DUNNO, LOGAN. THE WAY HELA SPOKE TO RAY--AND RAY HASN'T SMILED ONCE SINCE THEN!
WE DON'T DARE TALK OPENLY TO HER BECAUSE SHE HASN'T TOLD CYCLOPS WHO SHE REALLY IS--WHICH IS SO DUMB AND SO SAD--AND SHE WON'T USE PSI-SPEECH. SHE'S THE LONELIEST PERSON I KNOW...
...AND SHE SEEMS TO WANT IT THAT WAY.
IN THAT, SHE'S SO MUCH LIKE HER DAD. HE HEARD HELA-HE MUST KNOW WHO RAY IS-- BUT HE HASN'T SAID A WORD...


LATER...
AH SCROUNGED Y'ALL SOME DISGUISES.
LOVE THIS TOWN-- IT'S GOT MY KIND'A DRESS CODE!
SEE Y'ALL LATER!
DON'T FORGET TO WRITE!
WHERE DID ROGUE *GET* THESE OUTFITS?!
I DON'T WANT TO KNOW.
AN' I DON'T WANT ANY CUTE REMARKS, PRYDE!
HEY, I *LIKE*--!
YOU *MIND* ME, GIRL!
I'M SORRY. IT'S JUST, IF I DON'T MAKE JOKES, I'LL START CRYING. OR SCREAMING.
WOLVERINE, I KEEP SEEING *HELA* IN MY MIND'S-EYE...
...AND WONDER WHEN WE'LL MEET AGAIN.
SOONER OR LATER, DARLIN', EVERYONE DOES.
THAT DOESN'T SCARE YOU?
NEVER THE GOIN'-- ONLY HOW I GO.
I GUESS I'VE GOT TOO MUCH IMAGINATION. I CAN'T STOP THINKING ABOUT IT.
I'M AFRAID, LOGAN. NO MATTER HOW HARD I TRY NOT TO BE, I'M ALWAYS AFRAID.
I DON'T WANT TO DIE.
PRETTY SILLY, huh-- SOME ATTITUDE FOR A SEMI-SAMURAI SUPERHERO?!
NO LAW AGAINST EVEN THE BRAVEST HERO...
...BEIN' HUMAN.
C'MON-- LET'S GET TO WORK.

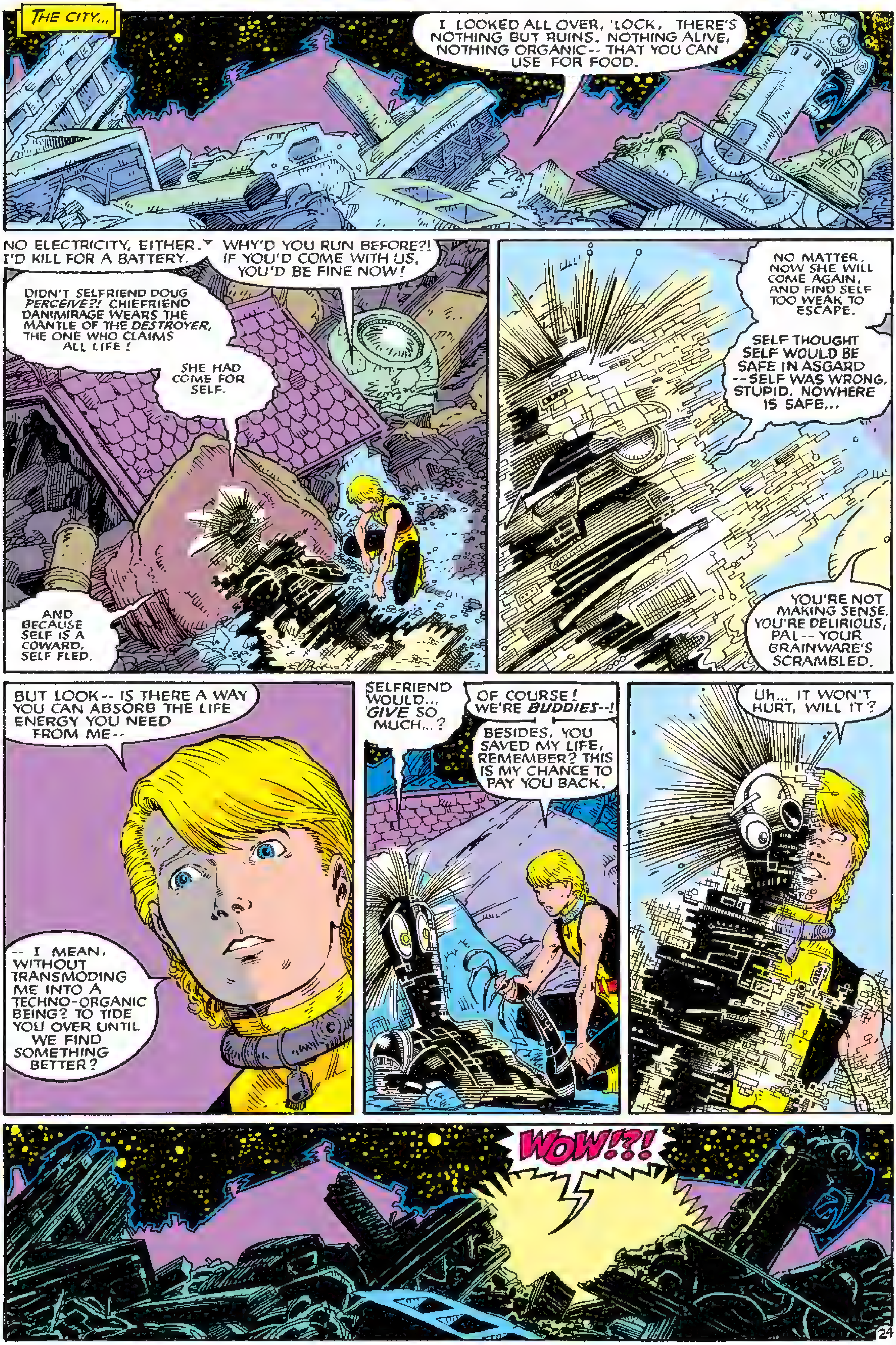

IN ANOTHER PART OF THE CITY...
TELL ME, SUNSPOT...
...THOU HANDSOMEST OF DEVILS...
...WHICH OF US...
...DOST THOU LOVE BEST?
AND IT BETTER BE ME!
FAIR LADIES, MUST I CHOOSE--?
GASP!
I HATE TO SPOIL A BEAUTIFUL MOMENT...
...BUT I NEED YOU.
Whew!
SAVE US!
PROTECT US!
DON'T LET HER TAKE US!
THEY'RE TERRIFIED--OF DANIELLE?!!
VIGDAL BE MY NAME, LASS--hic--WHY WASTE THINE AFFECTIONS ON YON LACKBEARD SHADOWSKIN PIP-hic-SQUEAK?
GIMME A BREAK, WILLYA, PAL?
CAST THY BEAUTEOUS EYE INSTEAD ON A WARRIOR OF STATURE--ULP!?!
ART THOU MAD, DOLT, TO APPROACH ONE OF THE RIDERS?!
LET HER HAVE THE BOY--
--AND MAYHAP THOU'LT SEE THE MORROW'S SUNRISE!
WHAT THE HECK IS THAT ALL ABOUT?!
ARE YOU USING YOUR POWER TO FRIGHTEN EVERYONE, MIRAGE?
I HAVEN'T DONE A THING--EXCEPT WALK THROUGH THE LOUSY DOOR!
WEIRD. DEFINITELY WEIRD.

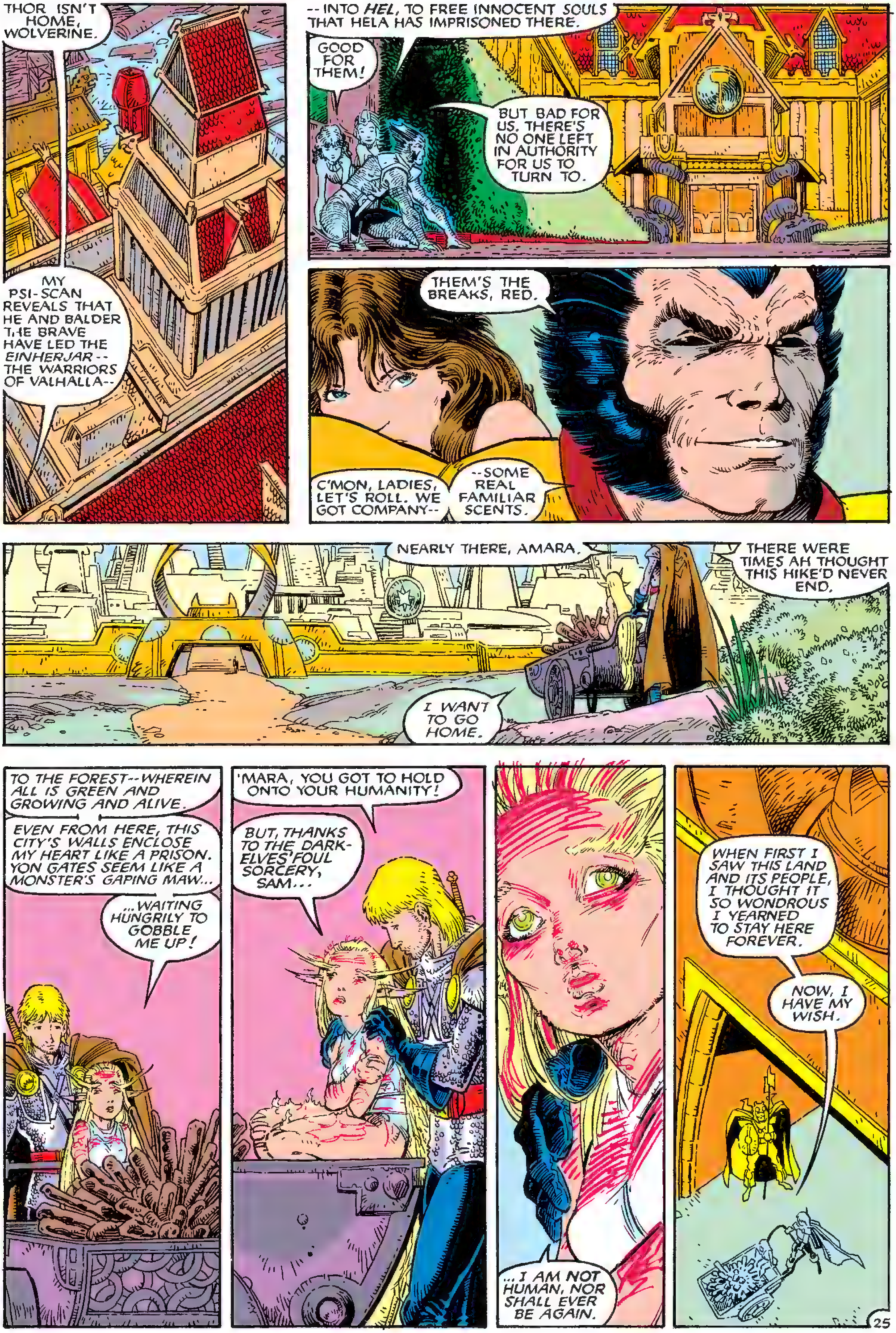

WISH I KNEW MORE ABOUT NORSE MYTHOLOGY, MAYBE I COULD FIGURE THIS OUT...
DON'T LOOK AT ME, *MENINA*. WE HAD BETTER THINGS TO DO IN BRAZIL, THAN READ VIKING STORIES.
'LOCK'S UP AHEAD. HE'S STILL ALIVE!
HOW DO YOU KNOW?
I... I SENSE IT.
BUT I COULD NEVER DO ANYTHING LIKE THIS ON EARTH. I'VE CHANGED-- WE ALL HAVE-- SINCE THE ENCHANTRESS KIDNAPPED US TO ASGARD...
...BUT FOR THE BETTER?
THERE HE IS!
...FRIENDS...
HIS LIFEGLOW'S SO DIM-- WE REACHED HIM JUST IN TIME.
NOT TO WORRY, PARTNER. DANI'LL FLY YOU BACK TO OUR HIDEOUT AND WE'LL FIX YOU UP GOOD AS NEW IN A JIFFY!
RIGHT, DANI?
SCREAM!
MAKER SMASHER UNFRIEND TERMINATION LIE FOE LIFEND FEAR FLEE
DANGER!
WARL--
WHUNF!
'LOCK WHAT'RE--
YIAOW!
HE'S GONE CRAZY!

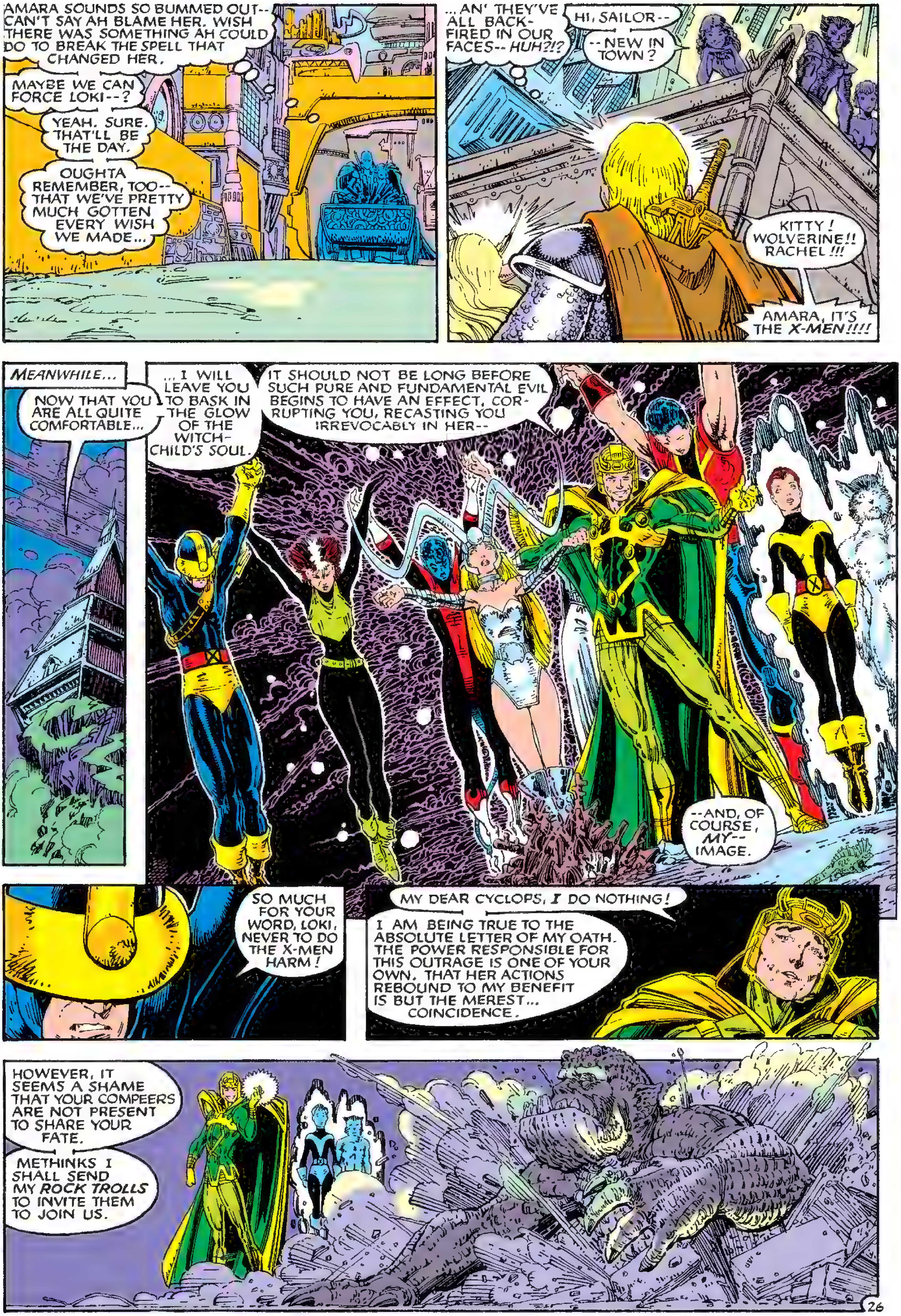

HIS WOUND MUST HAVE DRIVEN HIM INSANE!
HE'S RABBITTING--!
YOU LOONEY--! PUT ME DOWN!
NOT TILL FRIEND AND SELF ARE SAFE!
HE'S TOO WEAK, TOO BADLY HURT-- HE CAN'T MAINTAIN SUCH A PACE FOR LONG.
HE WON'T GET FAR. WE'LL FIND HIM.
AND THEN WHAT? HE WAS GLAD TO SEE US UNTIL HE GOT A GOOD LOOK AT YOU, DANI.
THAT'S WHAT SPOOKED HIM.
THE CRIES CAME FROM OVER HERE--!
'TIS THE SHADOWSKIN OUTLANDER!
YOU CHILDREN-- EXPLAIN YOURSELVES!
WE'RE MINDING OUR OWN BUSINESS.
I SUGGEST YOU DO THE SAME.
SHE COWED THEM--WARRIORS OF ASGARD-- WITH A LOOK.
WHAT DO THEY-- AND WARLOCK-- BEHOLD IN DANIELLE THAT I CANNOT?!
I THOUGHT WE WOULD ALL BE HAPPY IN ASGARD-- THAT THIS WAS WHERE THE NEW MUTANTS TRULY BELONGED-- BUT NOW... I WONDER...?


ELSEWHERE...
THAT'S OUR DESTINATION?
YONDER DEN BE HOME TO THE ENCHANTRESS--
--THE GREATEST SORCERESS IN THE REALM...
...SAVE FOR THE NORN QUEEN, KARNILLA, WHOSE DREAD POWER RIVALS LOKI'S!
MY BELOVED'S SCENT-- AND THAT OF HER COMPANIONS--
--LEADS...
...THERE!
WHAT ALL OF A SUDDEN...
...LIT HIS FIRE?!
I'LL TELEPORT AFTER HIM! HE'S IN NO SHAPE TO RUN INTO TROUBLE!
WE'RE HOT ON YOUR HEELS, FUZZY!
BAMF
BUT THIS DON'T LOOK TO ME...
...LIKE ANY TROUBLE WE CAN HELP THE BOY WITH.
X-MEN--?!?
C'EST INCROYABLE! C'EST UN MIRACLE!!
MISS MANH? KARMA-- IS THAT YOU?!
OUI, CYCLOPS-- ALIVE AND WELL AND OVERJOYED TO SEE YOU.
LORD FORGIVE ME...
...WHAT WAS I DOING?!?
WHEN I SAW MY PRINCE, I COULD NA' HELP MYSELF-- I BECAME MY WOLF-SELF, I ACTED LIKE AN... ANIMAL!
BUT I'M NOT! I'M A GIRL, A HUMAN BEING!!
AREN'T I?
AS THEY MAKE THEIR WAY INTO THE CITADEL, TALES ARE QUICKLY TOLD...
WHEN OUR TEAMS IN THE CITY REPORT IN, WE'LL HAVE THEM JOIN FORCES.
I THINK, THOUGH, KARMA, YOU WORRY TOO MUCH ABOUT MY LITTLE SISTER.
SAY THAT, COLOSSUS, WHEN YOU HAVE SEEN HER FOR YOURSELF. THIS IS HER INNER SANCTUM.

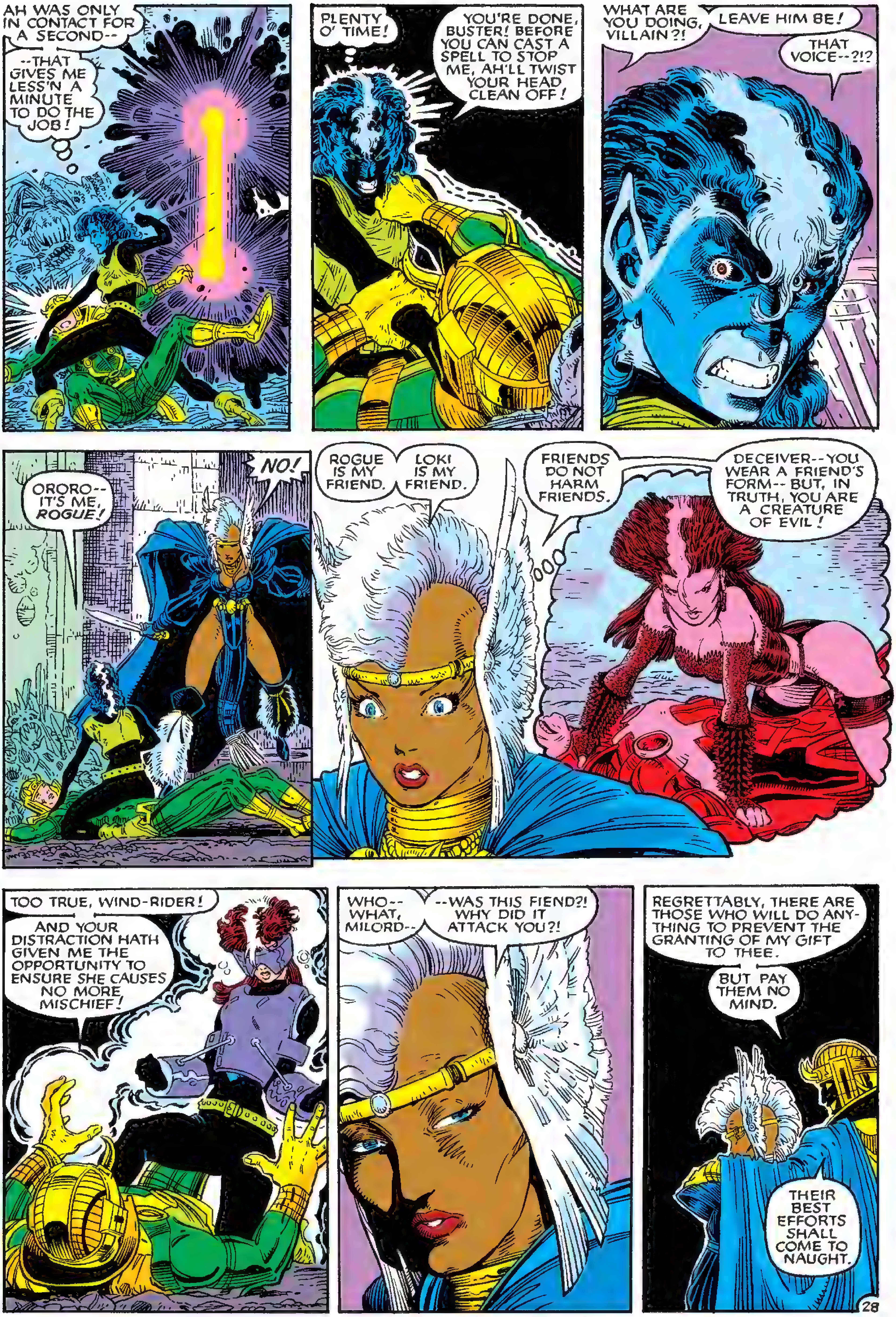
PETER!
AND THE WOLVES! HOW APPROPRIATE.
KARMA-- I THOUGHT I TOLD YOU I WANTED TO BE LEFT *ALONE*.
ILLYANA--!?!
SHE SOUNDS SO MUCH LIKE HERSELF-- BUT THERE IS AN AURA ABOUT HER THAT... TERRIFIES ME.
IT MUST BE MY IMAGINATION-- AND YET...?
MOST OF THE X-BABIES RAN OFF A WHILE AGO AND LEFT ME PRETTY MUCH ON MY OWN.
SILLY MEWLING BRATS!
SO WHO NEEDS 'EM?!
YOU ARRIVED AT THE RIGHT MOMENT. I'M ABOUT TO CAST A LOCATER SPELL I FOUND TO ZERO IN ON ORORO.
WE CAN NAB HER AND BE GONE BEFORE LOKI SUSPECTS...
ILLYANA, WAIT! YOU CAN'T TAKE CHANCES--!
BUT EVEN AS CYCLOPS CRIES HIS WARNING, A BURST OF ENERGY FILLS THE CHAMBER AND...
SILLY GEESE--TO THINK THE ENCHANTRESS' WARDS WOULD HIDE THEE FROM MINE ELDRITCH SIGHT...
...MUCH LESS PROTECT THEE.
FASCINATING. I CHARGED FAIR AMORA TO MAKE THE X-MEN HER PRISONERS AND SLAY THEM HORRIBLY IN MY NAME. HOWEVER, IT APPEARS THESE MORTALS HAVE TURNED THE TABLES ON HER.
I SHOULD HAVE KNOWN. IF A THING NEEDS DOING WELL...
...'TIS BEST DONE BY ONESELF!

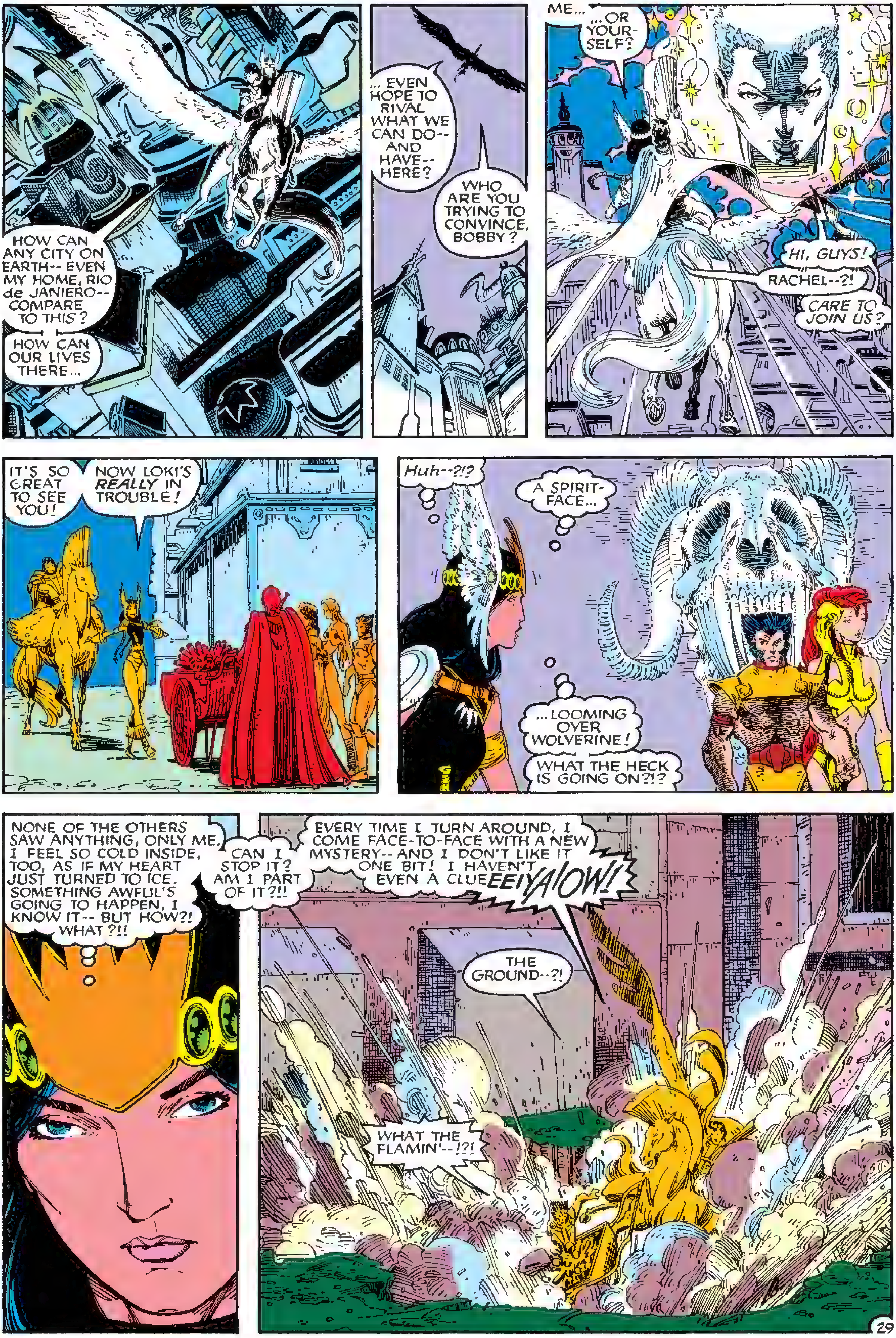

THE CITY...
I LOOKED ALL OVER, 'LOCK. THERE'S NOTHING BUT RUINS. NOTHING ALIVE, NOTHING ORGANIC -- THAT YOU CAN USE FOR FOOD.
NO ELECTRICITY, EITHER. I'D KILL FOR A BATTERY.
WHY'D YOU RUN BEFORE?! IF YOU'D COME WITH US, YOU'D BE FINE NOW!
DIDN'T SELFRIEND DOUG *PERCEIVE?!* CHIEFRIEND DANIMIRAGE WEARS THE MANTLE OF THE *DESTROYER,* THE ONE WHO CLAIMS ALL LIFE!
SHE HAD COME FOR SELF.
AND BECAUSE SELF IS A COWARD, SELF FLED.
NO MATTER. NOW SHE WILL COME AGAIN, AND FIND SELF TOO WEAK TO ESCAPE.
SELF THOUGHT SELF WOULD BE SAFE IN ASGARD -- SELF WAS WRONG, STUPID. NOWHERE IS SAFE...
YOU'RE NOT MAKING SENSE. YOU'RE DELIRIOUS, PAL -- YOUR BRAINWARE'S SCRAMBLED.
BUT LOOK -- IS THERE A WAY YOU CAN ABSORB THE LIFE ENERGY YOU NEED FROM ME --
-- I MEAN, WITHOUT TRANSMODING ME INTO A TECHNO-ORGANIC BEING? TO TIDE YOU OVER UNTIL WE FIND SOMETHING BETTER?
SELFRIEND WOULD... *GIVE* SO MUCH...?
OF COURSE! WE'RE *BUDDIES*--!
BESIDES, YOU SAVED MY LIFE, REMEMBER? THIS IS MY CHANCE TO PAY YOU BACK.
Uh... IT WON'T HURT, WILL IT?
WOW!?!

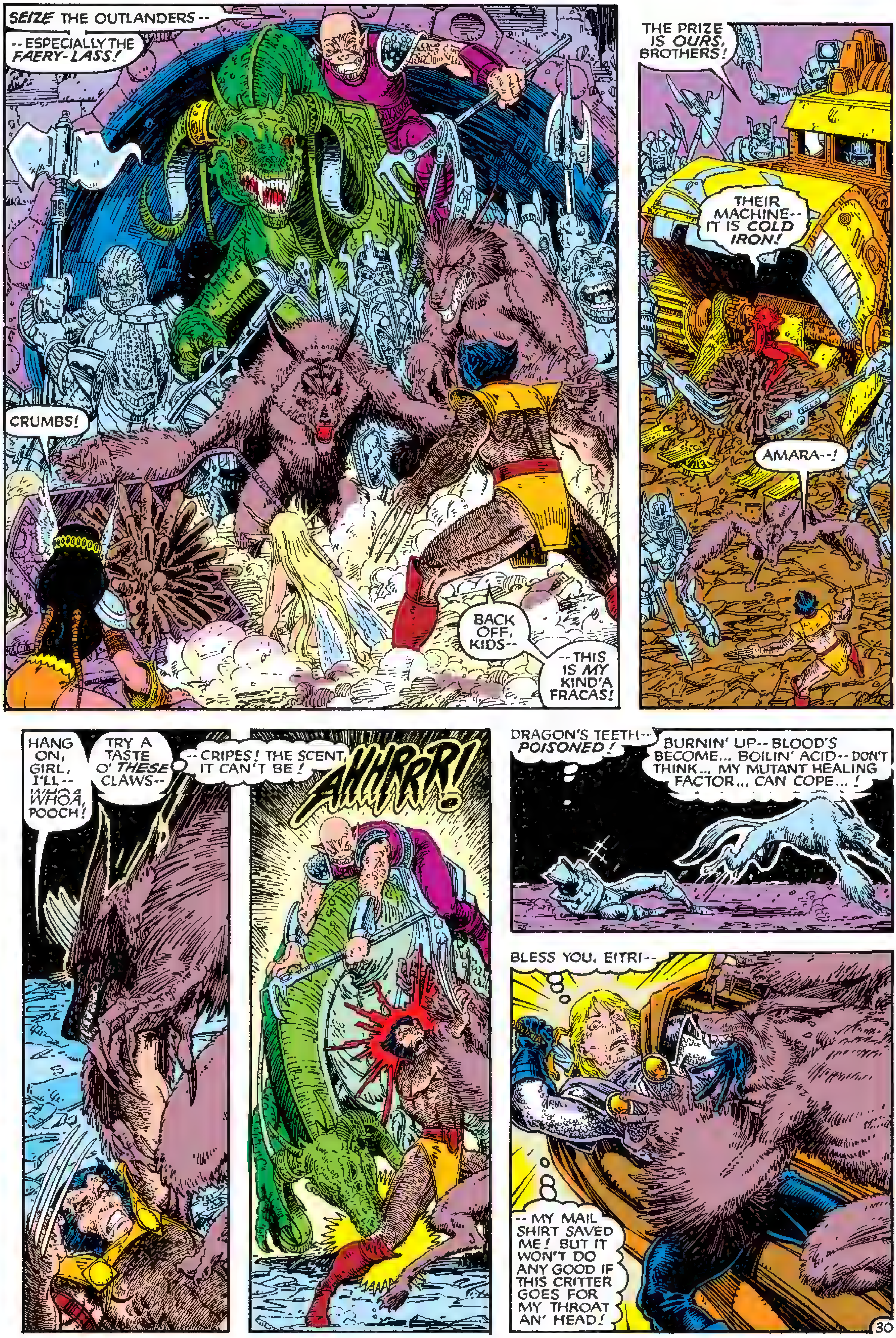

THOR ISN'T HOME, WOLVERINE.
MY PSI-SCAN REVEALS THAT HE AND BALDER THE BRAVE HAVE LED THE EINHERJAR -- THE WARRIORS OF VALHALLA--
-- INTO HEL, TO FREE INNOCENT SOULS THAT HELA HAS IMPRISONED THERE.
GOOD FOR THEM!
BUT BAD FOR US. THERE'S NO ONE LEFT IN AUTHORITY FOR US TO TURN TO.
THEM'S THE BREAKS, RED.
C'MON, LADIES, LET'S ROLL. WE GOT COMPANY--
--SOME REAL FAMILIAR SCENTS.
NEARLY THERE, AMARA.
THERE WERE TIMES AH THOUGHT THIS HIKE'D NEVER END.
I WANT TO GO HOME.
TO THE FOREST--WHEREIN ALL IS GREEN AND GROWING AND ALIVE.
EVEN FROM HERE, THIS CITY'S WALLS ENCLOSE MY HEART LIKE A PRISON. YON GATES SEEM LIKE A MONSTER'S GAPING MAW...
...WAITING HUNGRILY TO GOBBLE ME UP!
'MARA, YOU GOT TO HOLD ONTO YOUR HUMANITY!
BUT, THANKS TO THE DARK-ELVES' FOUL SORCERY, SAM...
...I AM NOT HUMAN, NOR SHALL EVER BE AGAIN.
WHEN FIRST I SAW THIS LAND AND ITS PEOPLE, I THOUGHT IT SO WONDROUS I YEARNED TO STAY HERE FOREVER.
NOW, I HAVE MY WISH.

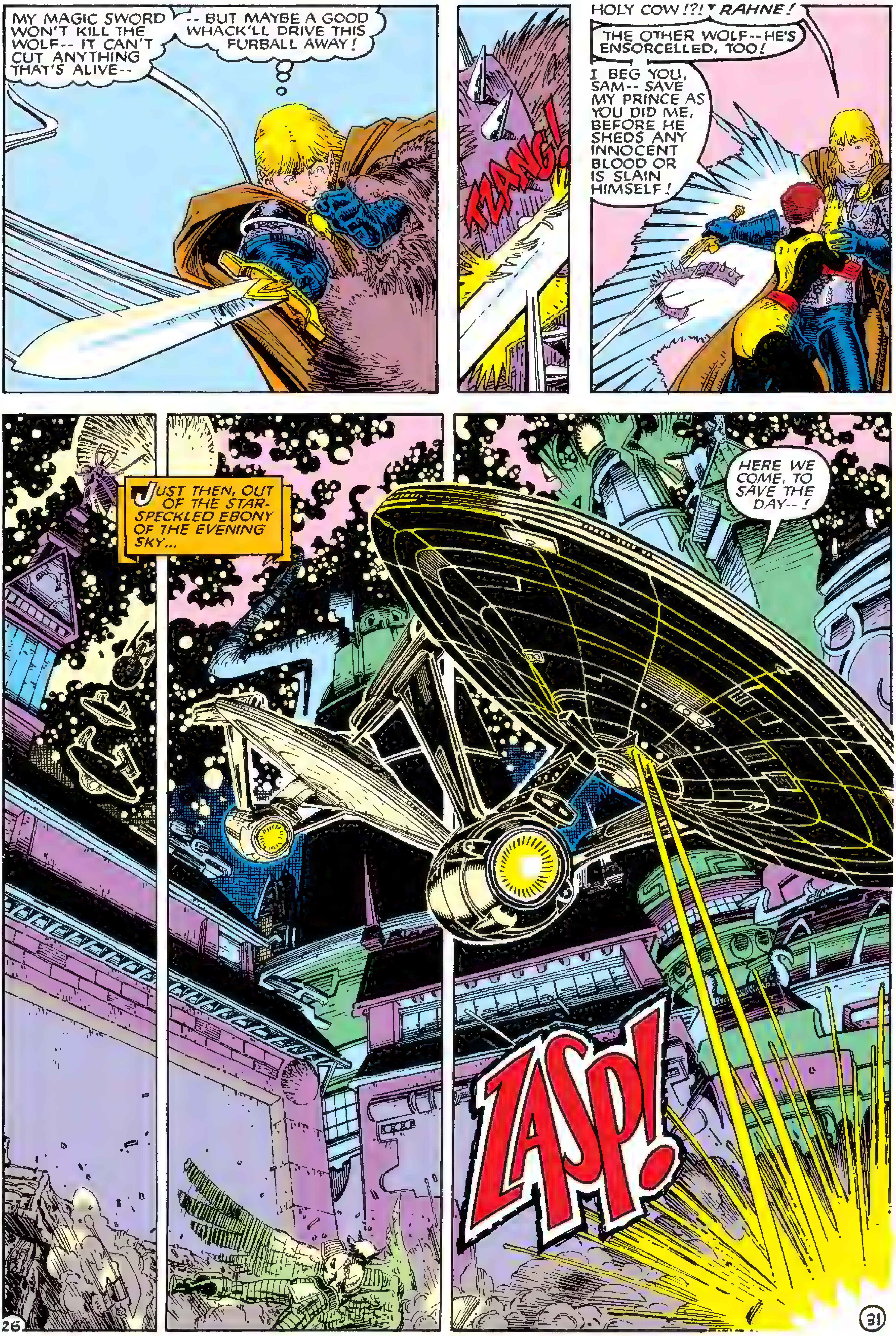

AMARA SOUNDS SO BUMMED OUT--CAN'T SAY AH BLAME HER. WISH THERE WAS SOMETHING AH COULD DO TO BREAK THE SPELL THAT CHANGED HER.
MAYBE WE CAN FORCE LOKI--?
YEAH. SURE. THAT'LL BE THE DAY.
OUGHTA REMEMBER, TOO--THAT WE'VE PRETTY MUCH GOTTEN EVERY WISH WE MADE...
...AN' THEY'VE ALL BACKFIRED IN OUR FACES-- HUH?!?
HI, SAILOR--
--NEW IN TOWN?
KITTY! WOLVERINE!! RACHEL!!!
AMARA, IT'S THE X-MEN!!!!
MEANWHILE...
NOW THAT YOU ARE ALL QUITE COMFORTABLE...
...I WILL LEAVE YOU TO BASK IN THE GLOW OF THE WITCH-CHILD'S SOUL.
IT SHOULD NOT BE LONG BEFORE SUCH PURE AND FUNDAMENTAL EVIL BEGINS TO HAVE AN EFFECT, CORRUPTING YOU, RECASTING YOU IRREVOCABLY IN HER--
--AND, OF COURSE, MY--IMAGE.
SO MUCH FOR YOUR WORD, LOKI, NEVER TO DO THE X-MEN HARM!
MY DEAR CYCLOPS, I DO NOTHING!
I AM BEING TRUE TO THE ABSOLUTE LETTER OF MY OATH. THE POWER RESPONSIBLE FOR THIS OUTRAGE IS ONE OF YOUR OWN. THAT HER ACTIONS REBOUND TO MY BENEFIT IS BUT THE MEREST... COINCIDENCE.
HOWEVER, IT SEEMS A SHAME THAT YOUR COMPEERS ARE NOT PRESENT TO SHARE YOUR FATE.
METHINKS I SHALL SEND MY ROCK TROLLS TO INVITE THEM TO JOIN US.

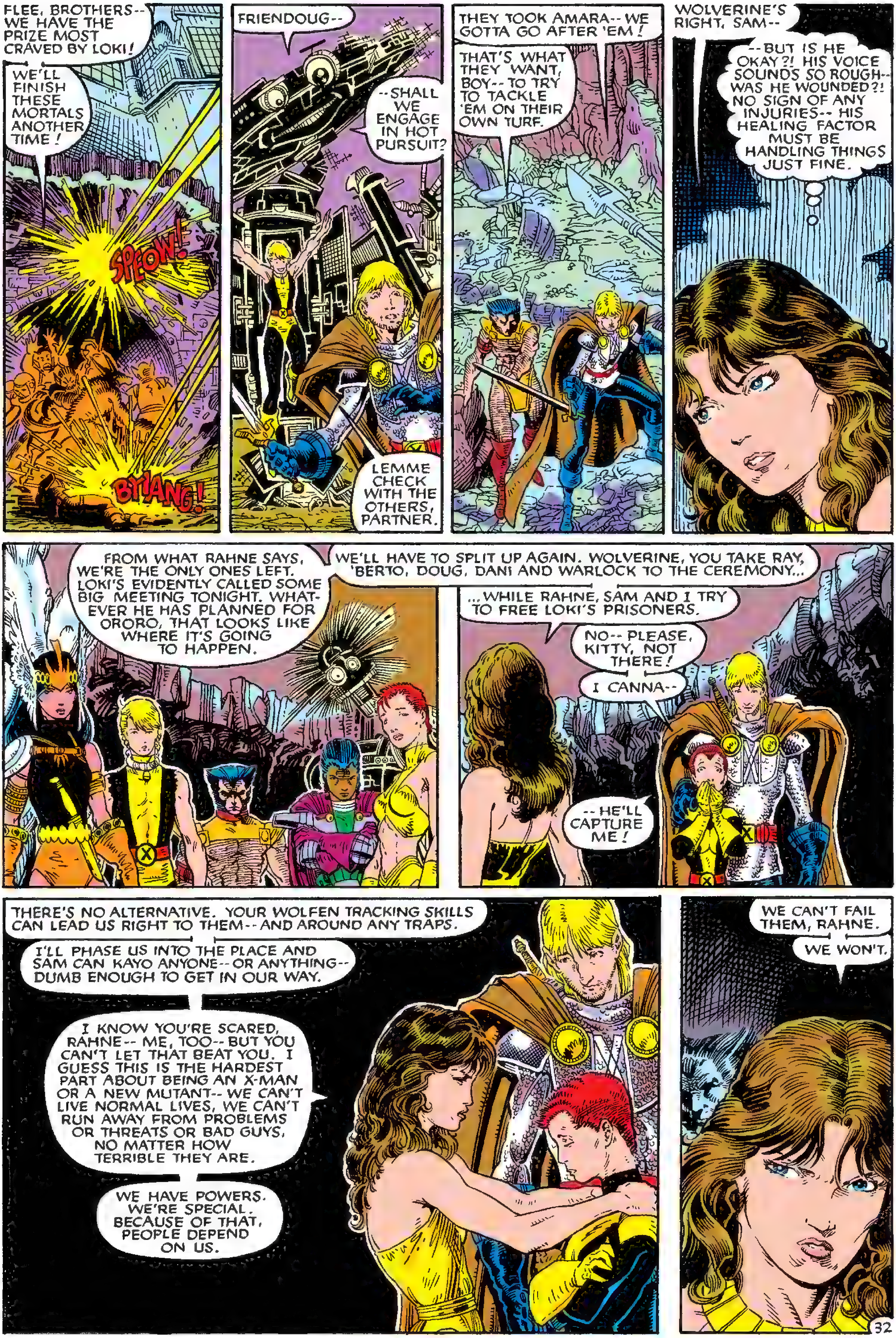
I HAVE WORK FOR THEE AND THINE, RUGRI.
THESE CHANGELINGS SHALL GUIDE THEE TO THY QUARRY...
...BOUND TO MY WILL...
...BY THE COLLARS OF OBEDIENCE. LET THEIR NATURES MATCH THE NAMES I GRANT THEM:
...GRIMFANG AND BLEAKHEART!
THE SLAVER ENCHANTMENT WILL REMAIN IN FORCE SO LONG AS THEY WEAR THOSE COLLARS.
AND NO MORTAL POWER OR AGENCY CAN REMOVE THEM.
GO THOU, RUGRI-- BRING ME THE X-MEN AND NEW MUTANTS STILL FREE.
YOU'VE MADE... A FATAL... MISTAKE... EVERYONE!
CHAINS--CANNOT BIND--
-- A TELEPORTER!
BAMF
NIGHTCRAWLER--
--HE'S ESCAPING!
NOT QUITE!
YOU GAVE ME THIS CHANCE, ELF. AH WON'T FAIL YOU!
BY TOUCHIN' ME WHILE HE TOUCHED CYKE...
...AH ABSORBED BOTH THEIR POWERS!
BAMF
ZRAM!
AIOWUHNF!

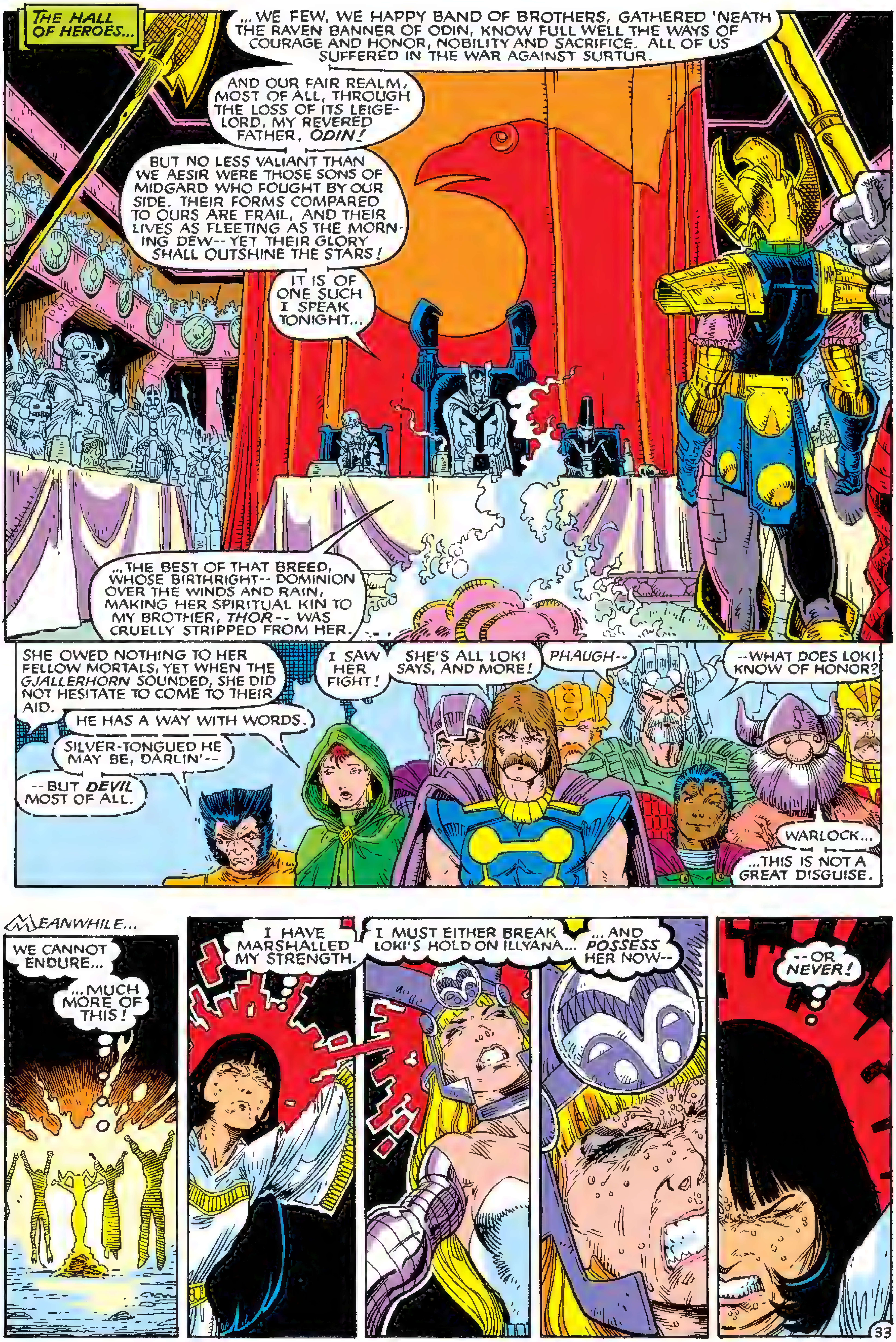

AH WAS ONLY IN CONTACT FOR A SECOND--
--THAT GIVES ME LESS'N A MINUTE TO DO THE JOB!
PLENTY O' TIME!
YOU'RE DONE, BUSTER! BEFORE YOU CAN CAST A SPELL TO STOP ME, AH'LL TWIST YOUR HEAD CLEAN OFF!
WHAT ARE YOU DOING, VILLAIN?!
LEAVE HIM BE!
THAT VOICE--?!?
NO!
ORORO-- IT'S ME, ROGUE!
ROGUE IS MY FRIEND.
LOKI IS MY FRIEND.
FRIENDS DO NOT HARM FRIENDS.
DECEIVER--YOU WEAR A FRIEND'S FORM-- BUT, IN TRUTH, YOU ARE A CREATURE OF EVIL!
TOO TRUE, WIND-RIDER!
AND YOUR DISTRACTION HATH GIVEN ME THE OPPORTUNITY TO ENSURE SHE CAUSES NO MORE MISCHIEF!
WHO-- WHAT, MILORD--
--WAS THIS FIEND?! WHY DID IT ATTACK YOU?!
REGRETTABLY, THERE ARE THOSE WHO WILL DO ANYTHING TO PREVENT THE GRANTING OF MY GIFT TO THEE.
BUT PAY THEM NO MIND.
THEIR BEST EFFORTS SHALL COME TO NAUGHT.

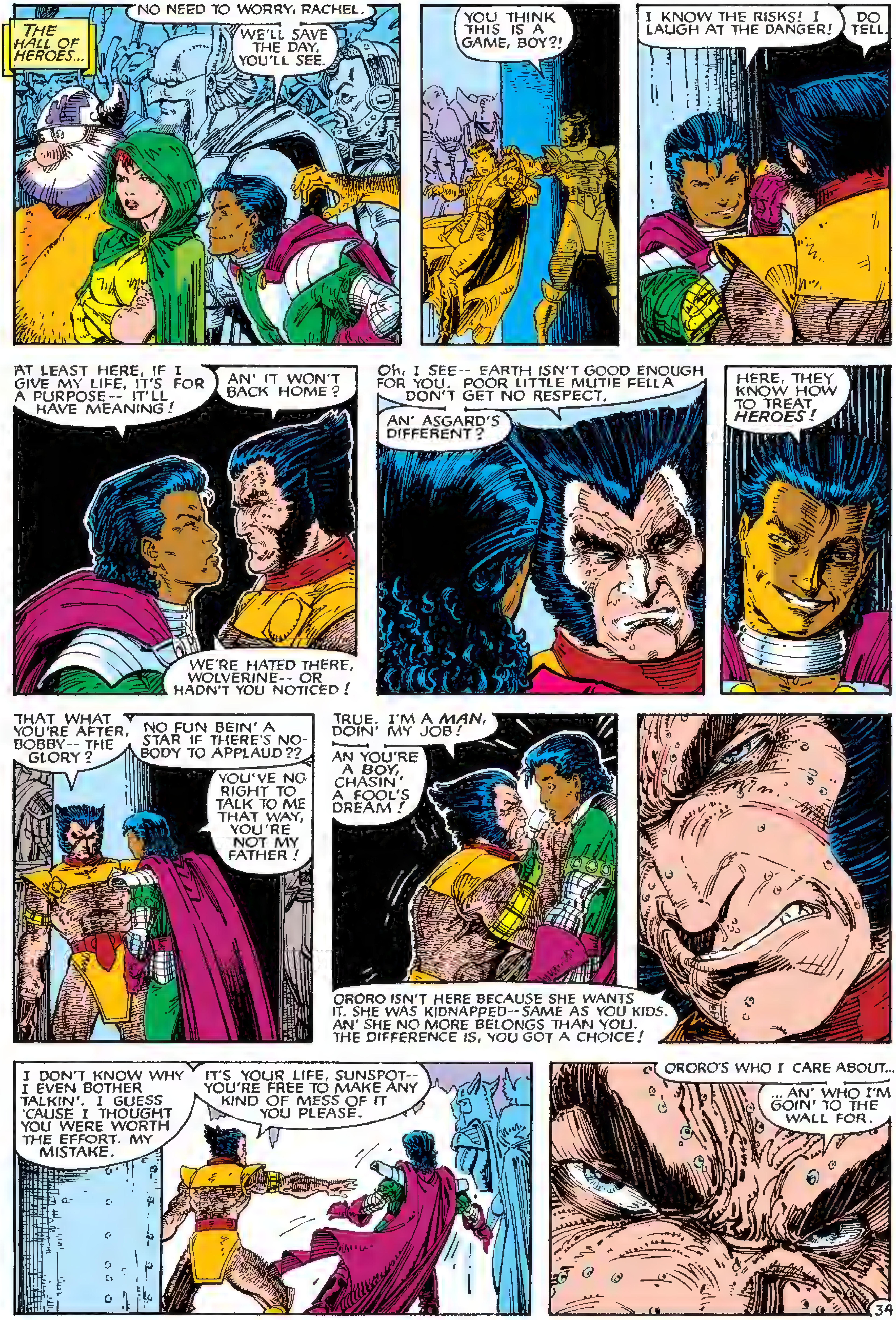

HOW CAN ANY CITY ON EARTH-- EVEN MY HOME, RIO de JANIERO-- COMPARE TO THIS?
HOW CAN OUR LIVES THERE...
...EVEN HOPE TO RIVAL WHAT WE CAN DO-- AND HAVE-- HERE?
WHO ARE YOU TRYING TO CONVINCE, BOBBY?
ME...
...OR YOURSELF?
HI, GUYS!
RACHEL--?!
CARE TO JOIN US?
IT'S SO GREAT TO SEE YOU!
NOW LOKI'S REALLY IN TROUBLE!
Huh--?!?
A SPIRIT-FACE...
...LOOMING OVER WOLVERINE!
WHAT THE HECK IS GOING ON?!?
NONE OF THE OTHERS SAW ANYTHING, ONLY ME. I FEEL SO COLD INSIDE, TOO, AS IF MY HEART JUST TURNED TO ICE. SOMETHING AWFUL'S GOING TO HAPPEN, I KNOW IT-- BUT HOW?! WHAT?!!
CAN I STOP IT? AM I PART OF IT?!!
EVERY TIME I TURN AROUND, I COME FACE-TO-FACE WITH A NEW MYSTERY-- AND I DON'T LIKE IT ONE BIT! I HAVEN'T EVEN A CLUE
EEIYAIOW!
THE GROUND--?!
WHAT THE FLAMIN'--!?!

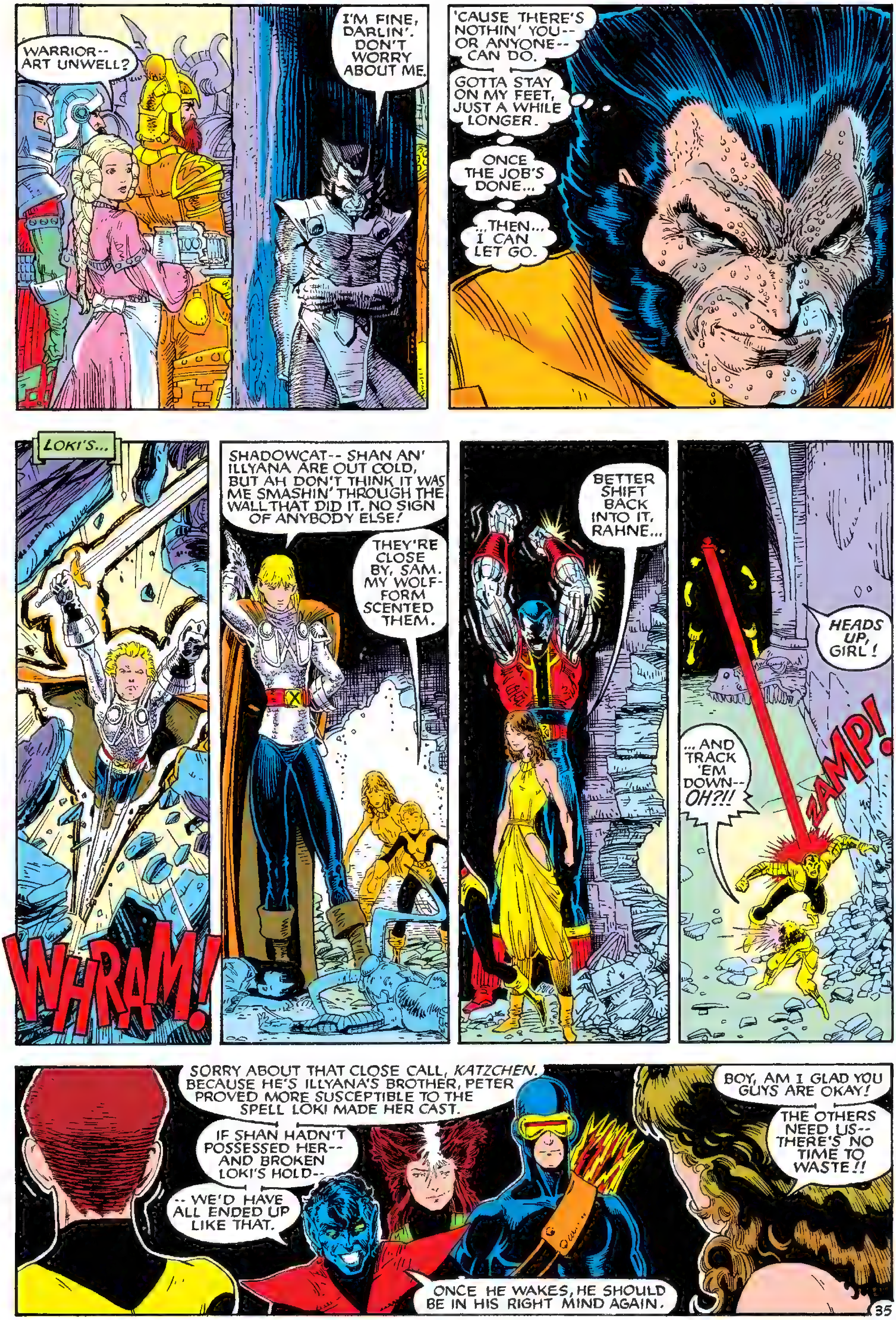

SEIZE THE OUTLANDERS--
--ESPECIALLY THE *FAERY-LASS!*
CRUMBS!
BACK OFF, KIDS--
--THIS IS *MY* KIND'A FRACAS!
THE PRIZE IS *OURS,* BROTHERS!
THEIR MACHINE-- IT IS *COLD IRON!*
AMARA--!
HANG ON, GIRL, I'LL-- WHOA, POOCH!
TRY A TASTE O' *THESE* CLAWS--
--CRIPES! THE SCENT, IT CAN'T BE!
AHHRRR!
DRAGON'S TEETH-- *POISONED!*
BURNIN' UP-- BLOOD'S BECOME... BOILIN' ACID-- DON'T THINK... MY MUTANT HEALING FACTOR... CAN COPE...!
BLESS YOU, EITRI--
--MY MAIL SHIRT SAVED ME! BUT IT WON'T DO ANY GOOD IF THIS CRITTER GOES FOR MY THROAT AN' HEAD!

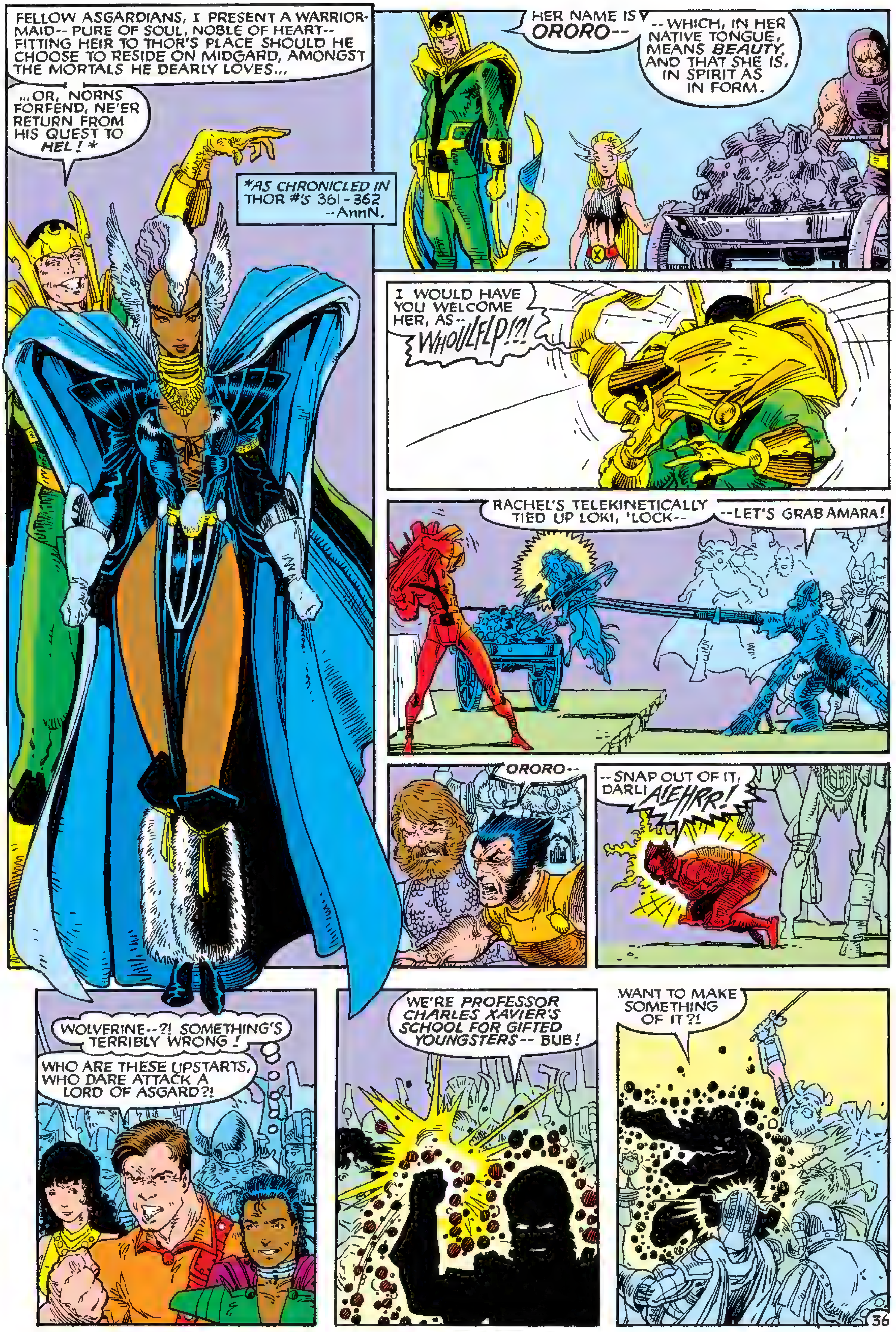

MY MAGIC SWORD WON'T KILL THE WOLF-- IT CAN'T CUT ANYTHING THAT'S ALIVE--
-- BUT MAYBE A GOOD WHACK'LL DRIVE THIS FURBALL AWAY!
TZANG!
HOLY COW!?! RAHNE!
THE OTHER WOLF--HE'S ENSORCELLED, TOO!
I BEG YOU, SAM-- SAVE MY PRINCE AS YOU DID ME, BEFORE HE SHEDS ANY INNOCENT BLOOD OR IS SLAIN HIMSELF!
JUST THEN, OUT OF THE STAR-SPECKLED EBONY OF THE EVENING SKY...
HERE WE COME, TO SAVE THE DAY--!
ZASP!


FLEE, BROTHERS-- WE HAVE THE PRIZE MOST CRAVED BY LOKI!
WE'LL FINISH THESE MORTALS ANOTHER TIME!
SPEOW!
BYANG!
FRIENDOUG--
--SHALL WE ENGAGE IN HOT PURSUIT?
LEMME CHECK WITH THE OTHERS, PARTNER.
THEY TOOK AMARA-- WE GOTTA GO AFTER 'EM!
THAT'S WHAT THEY WANT, BOY-- TO TRY TO TACKLE 'EM ON THEIR OWN TURF.
WOLVERINE'S RIGHT, SAM--
--BUT IS HE OKAY?! HIS VOICE SOUNDS SO ROUGH-- WAS HE WOUNDED?! NO SIGN OF ANY INJURIES-- HIS HEALING FACTOR MUST BE HANDLING THINGS JUST FINE.
FROM WHAT RAHNE SAYS, WE'RE THE ONLY ONES LEFT. LOKI'S EVIDENTLY CALLED SOME BIG MEETING TONIGHT. WHATEVER HE HAS PLANNED FOR ORORO, THAT LOOKS LIKE WHERE IT'S GOING TO HAPPEN.
WE'LL HAVE TO SPLIT UP AGAIN. WOLVERINE, YOU TAKE RAY, 'BERTO, DOUG, DANI AND WARLOCK TO THE CEREMONY...
...WHILE RAHNE, SAM AND I TRY TO FREE LOKI'S PRISONERS.
NO-- PLEASE, KITTY, NOT THERE!
I CANNA--
--HE'LL CAPTURE ME!
THERE'S NO ALTERNATIVE. YOUR WOLFEN TRACKING SKILLS CAN LEAD US RIGHT TO THEM-- AND AROUND ANY TRAPS.
I'LL PHASE US INTO THE PLACE AND SAM CAN KAYO ANYONE-- OR ANYTHING-- DUMB ENOUGH TO GET IN OUR WAY.
I KNOW YOU'RE SCARED, RAHNE-- ME, TOO-- BUT YOU CAN'T LET THAT BEAT YOU. I GUESS THIS IS THE HARDEST PART ABOUT BEING AN X-MAN OR A NEW MUTANT-- WE CAN'T LIVE NORMAL LIVES, WE CAN'T RUN AWAY FROM PROBLEMS OR THREATS OR BAD GUYS, NO MATTER HOW TERRIBLE THEY ARE.
WE HAVE POWERS. WE'RE SPECIAL. BECAUSE OF THAT, PEOPLE DEPEND ON US.
WE CAN'T FAIL THEM, RAHNE.
WE WON'T.

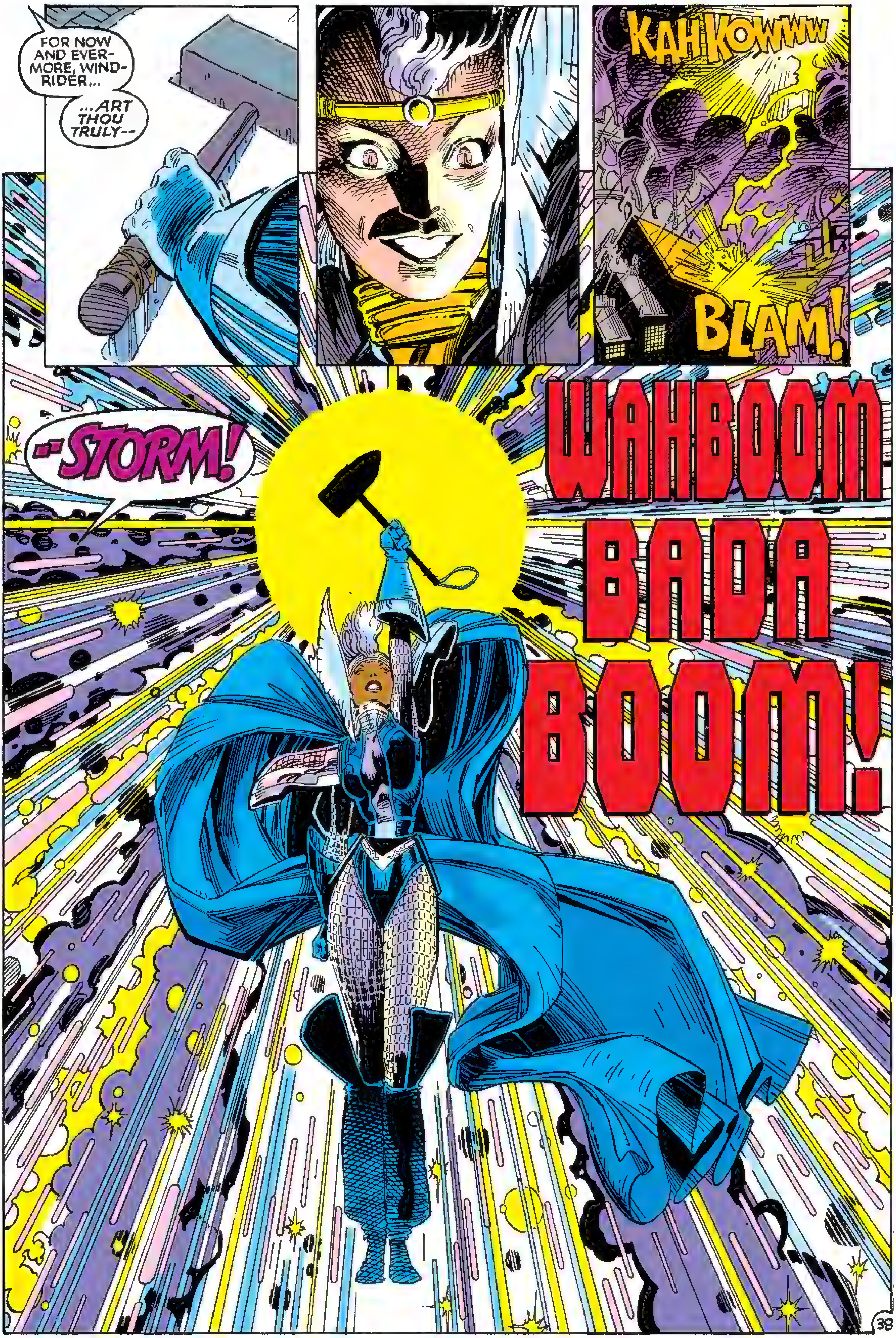

THE HALL OF HEROES...
...WE FEW, WE HAPPY BAND OF BROTHERS, GATHERED 'NEATH THE RAVEN BANNER OF ODIN, KNOW FULL WELL THE WAYS OF COURAGE AND HONOR, NOBILITY AND SACRIFICE. ALL OF US SUFFERED IN THE WAR AGAINST SURTUR.
AND OUR FAIR REALM, MOST OF ALL, THROUGH THE LOSS OF ITS LEIGE-LORD, MY REVERED FATHER, *ODIN!*
BUT NO LESS VALIANT THAN WE AESIR WERE THOSE SONS OF MIDGARD WHO FOUGHT BY OUR SIDE. THEIR FORMS COMPARED TO OURS ARE FRAIL, AND THEIR LIVES AS FLEETING AS THE MORNING DEW-- YET THEIR GLORY SHALL OUTSHINE THE STARS!
IT IS OF ONE SUCH I SPEAK TONIGHT...
...THE BEST OF THAT BREED, WHOSE BIRTHRIGHT-- DOMINION OVER THE WINDS AND RAIN, MAKING HER SPIRITUAL KIN TO MY BROTHER, *THOR*-- WAS CRUELLY STRIPPED FROM HER.
SHE OWED NOTHING TO HER FELLOW MORTALS, YET WHEN THE *GJALLERHORN* SOUNDED, SHE DID NOT HESITATE TO COME TO THEIR AID.
HE HAS A WAY WITH WORDS.
SILVER-TONGUED HE MAY BE, DARLIN'--
--BUT *DEVIL* MOST OF ALL.
I SAW HER FIGHT!
SHE'S ALL LOKI SAYS, AND MORE!
PHAUGH--
--WHAT DOES LOKI KNOW OF HONOR?
WARLOCK...
...THIS IS NOT A GREAT DISGUISE.
MEANWHILE...
WE CANNOT ENDURE...
...MUCH MORE OF THIS!
I HAVE MARSHALLED MY STRENGTH.
I MUST EITHER BREAK LOKI'S HOLD ON ILLYANA...
...AND *POSSESS* HER NOW--
--OR *NEVER!*

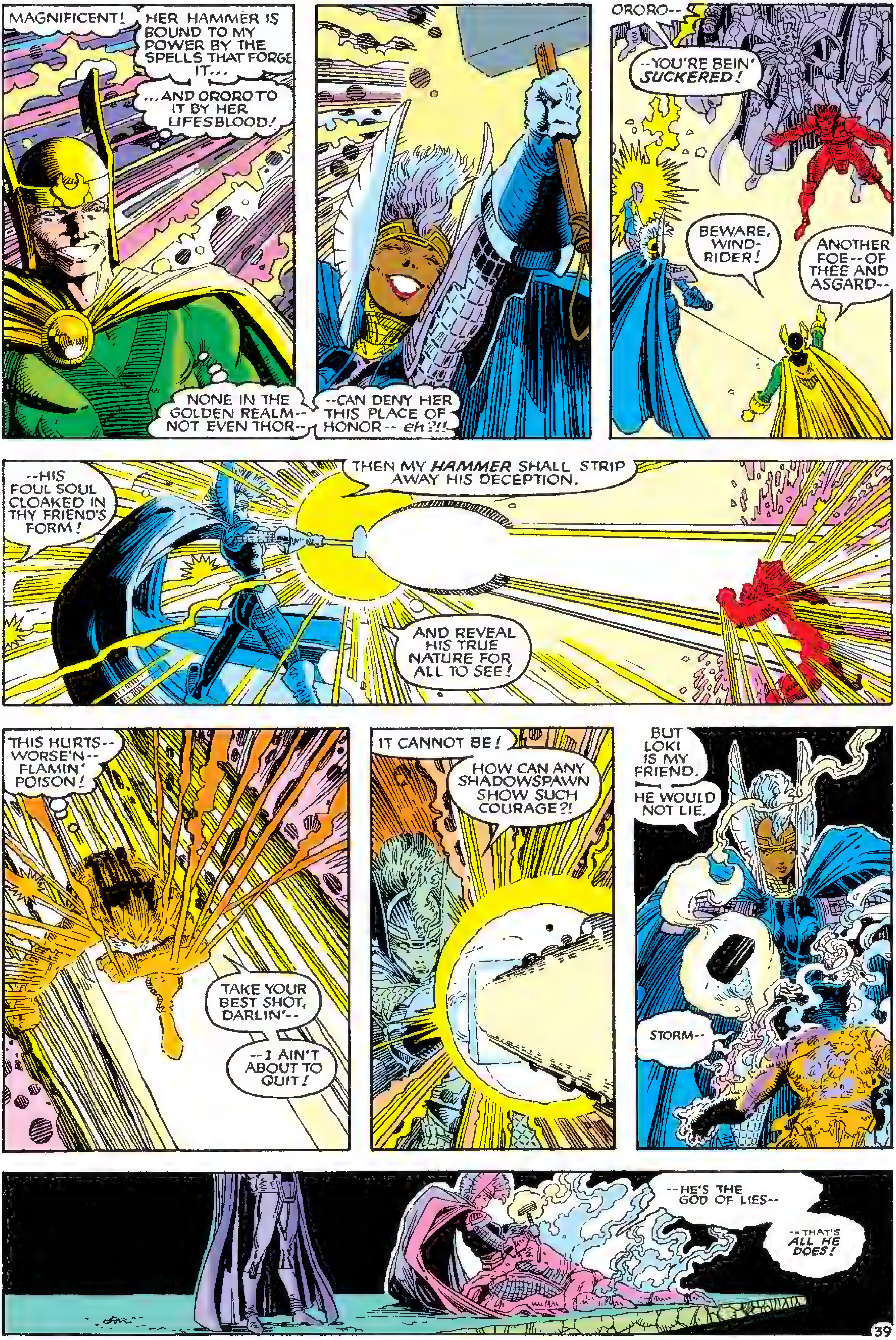

THE HALL OF HEROES...
NO NEED TO WORRY, RACHEL.
WE'LL SAVE THE DAY. YOU'LL SEE.
YOU THINK THIS IS A GAME, BOY?!
I KNOW THE RISKS! I LAUGH AT THE DANGER!
DO TELL.
AT LEAST HERE, IF I GIVE MY LIFE, IT'S FOR A PURPOSE-- IT'LL HAVE MEANING!
AN' IT WON'T BACK HOME?
WE'RE HATED THERE, WOLVERINE-- OR HADN'T YOU NOTICED!
Oh, I SEE-- EARTH ISN'T GOOD ENOUGH FOR YOU. POOR LITTLE MUTIE FELLA DON'T GET NO RESPECT.
AN' ASGARD'S DIFFERENT?
HERE, THEY KNOW HOW TO TREAT HEROES!
THAT WHAT YOU'RE AFTER, BOBBY-- THE GLORY?
NO FUN BEIN' A STAR IF THERE'S NOBODY TO APPLAUD??
YOU'VE NO RIGHT TO TALK TO ME THAT WAY. YOU'RE NOT MY FATHER!
TRUE. I'M A MAN, DOIN' MY JOB!
AN YOU'RE A BOY, CHASIN' A FOOL'S DREAM!
ORORO ISN'T HERE BECAUSE SHE WANTS IT. SHE WAS KIDNAPPED--SAME AS YOU KIDS. AN' SHE NO MORE BELONGS THAN YOU. THE DIFFERENCE IS, YOU GOT A CHOICE!
I DON'T KNOW WHY I EVEN BOTHER TALKIN'. I GUESS 'CAUSE I THOUGHT YOU WERE WORTH THE EFFORT. MY MISTAKE.
IT'S YOUR LIFE, SUNSPOT-- YOU'RE FREE TO MAKE ANY KIND OF MESS OF IT YOU PLEASE.
ORORO'S WHO I CARE ABOUT...
...AN' WHO I'M GOIN' TO THE WALL FOR.

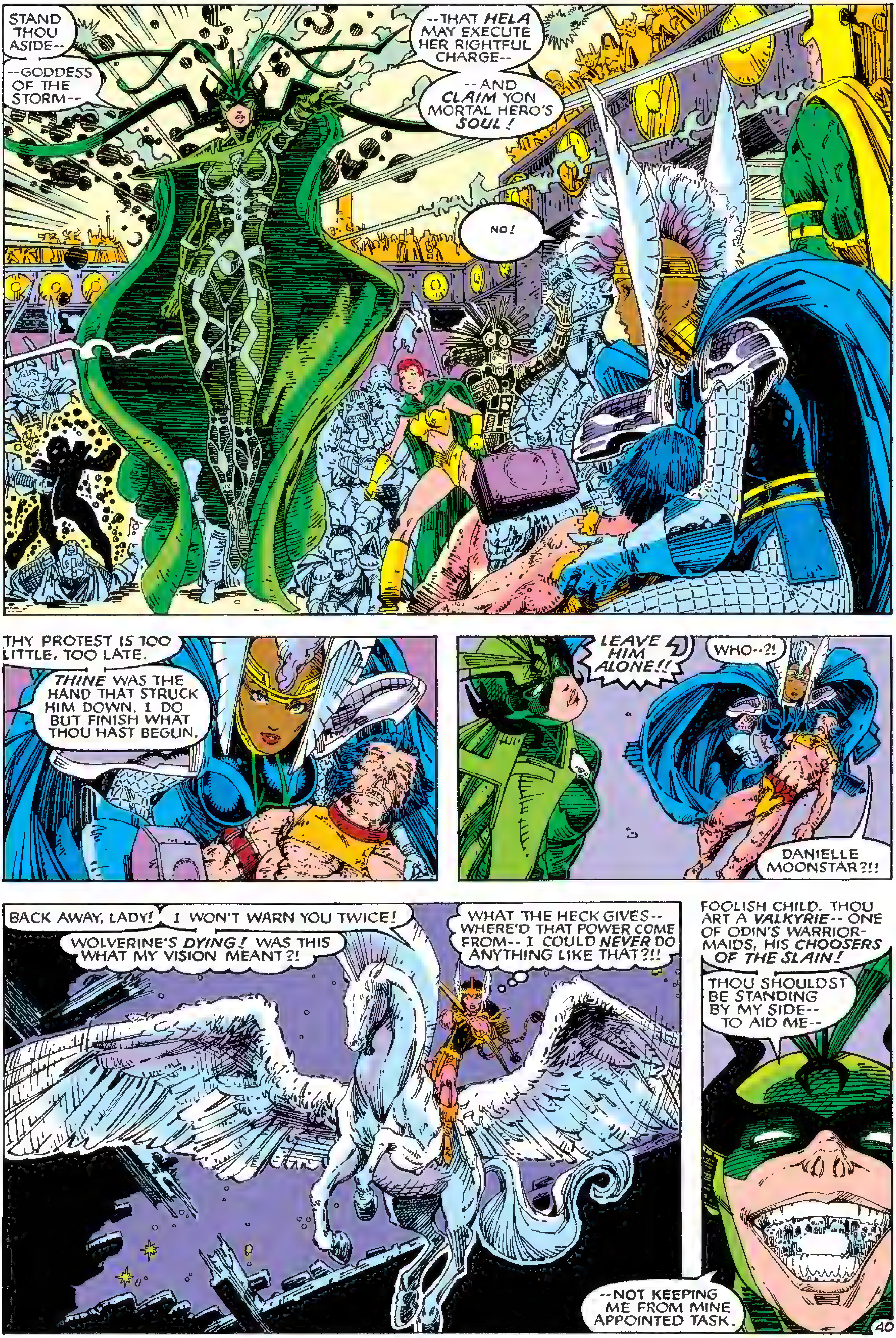

WARRIOR-- ART UNWELL?
I'M FINE, DARLIN'. DON'T WORRY ABOUT ME.
'CAUSE THERE'S NOTHIN' YOU-- OR ANYONE-- CAN DO.
GOTTA STAY ON MY FEET, JUST A WHILE LONGER.
ONCE THE JOB'S DONE...
...THEN... I CAN LET GO.
LOKI'S...
WHRAM!
SHADOWCAT-- SHAN AN' ILLYANA ARE OUT COLD, BUT AH DON'T THINK IT WAS ME SMASHIN' THROUGH THE WALL THAT DID IT. NO SIGN OF ANYBODY ELSE!
THEY'RE CLOSE BY, SAM. MY WOLF-FORM SCENTED THEM.
BETTER SHIFT BACK INTO IT, RAHNE...
HEADS UP, GIRL!
...AND TRACK 'EM DOWN-- OH?!!
ZAMP!
SORRY ABOUT THAT CLOSE CALL, *KATZCHEN*. BECAUSE HE'S ILLYANA'S BROTHER, PETER PROVED MORE SUSCEPTIBLE TO THE SPELL LOKI MADE HER CAST.
IF SHAN HADN'T POSSESSED HER-- AND BROKEN LOKI'S HOLD--
-- WE'D HAVE ALL ENDED UP LIKE THAT.
ONCE HE WAKES, HE SHOULD BE IN HIS RIGHT MIND AGAIN.
BOY, AM I GLAD YOU GUYS ARE OKAY!
THE OTHERS NEED US-- THERE'S NO TIME TO WASTE!!

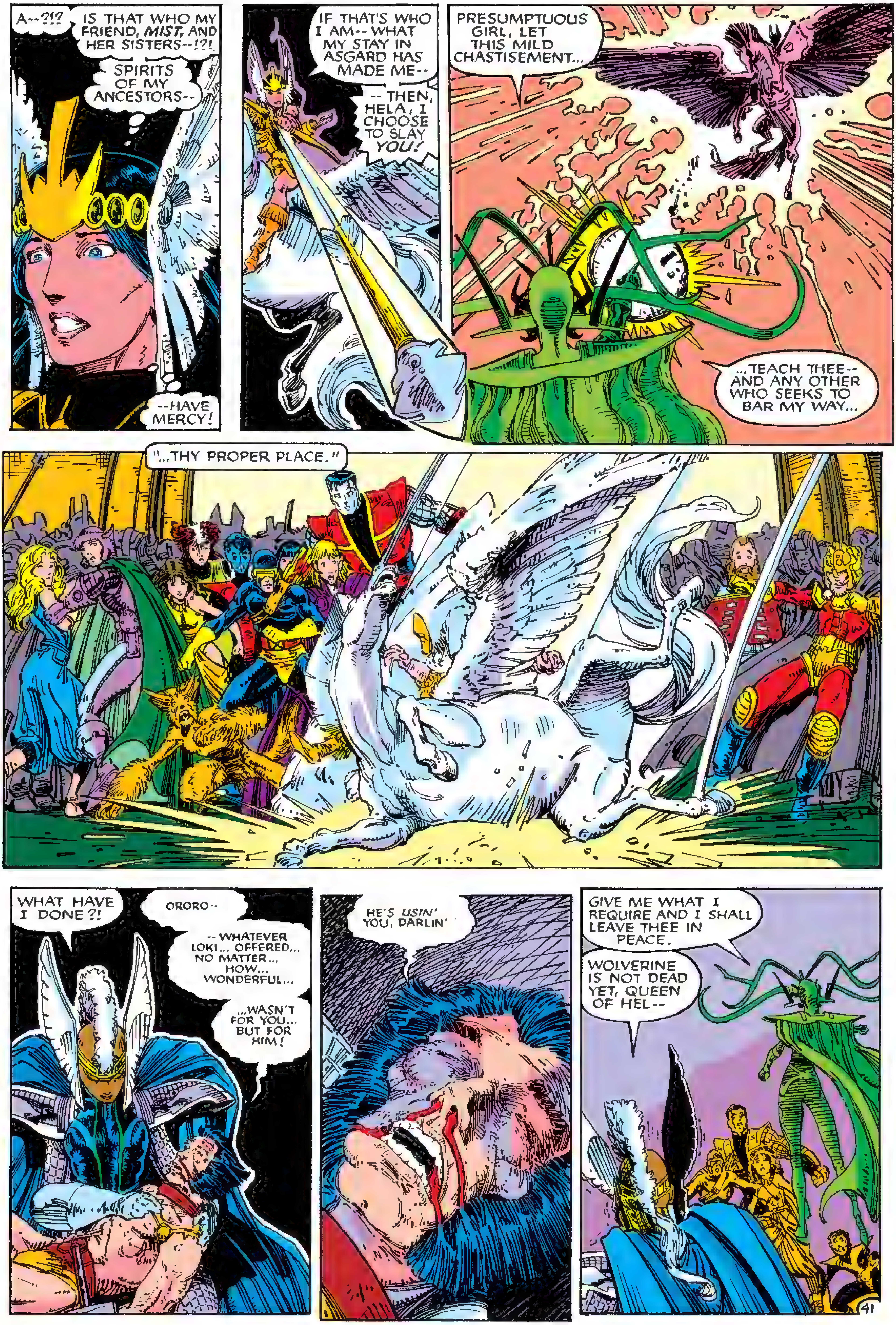

FELLOW ASGARDIANS, I PRESENT A WARRIOR-MAID-- PURE OF SOUL, NOBLE OF HEART-- FITTING HEIR TO THOR'S PLACE SHOULD HE CHOOSE TO RESIDE ON MIDGARD, AMONGST THE MORTALS HE DEARLY LOVES...
...OR, NORNS FORFEND, NE'ER RETURN FROM HIS QUEST TO *HEL!* *
*AS CHRONICLED IN THOR #'s 361-362 --AnnN.
HER NAME IS *ORORO*--
--WHICH, IN HER NATIVE TONGUE, MEANS *BEAUTY*. AND THAT SHE IS, IN SPIRIT AS IN FORM.
I WOULD HAVE YOU WELCOME HER, AS--
WHOULFLP!?!
RACHEL'S TELEKINETICALLY TIED UP LOKI, 'LOCK--
--LET'S GRAB AMARA!
ORORO--
--SNAP OUT OF IT, DARLI--
AIEHRR!
WOLVERINE--?! SOMETHING'S TERRIBLY WRONG!
WHO ARE THESE UPSTARTS, WHO DARE ATTACK A LORD OF ASGARD?!
WE'RE *PROFESSOR CHARLES XAVIER'S SCHOOL FOR GIFTED YOUNGSTERS*-- BUB!
WANT TO MAKE SOMETHING OF IT?!

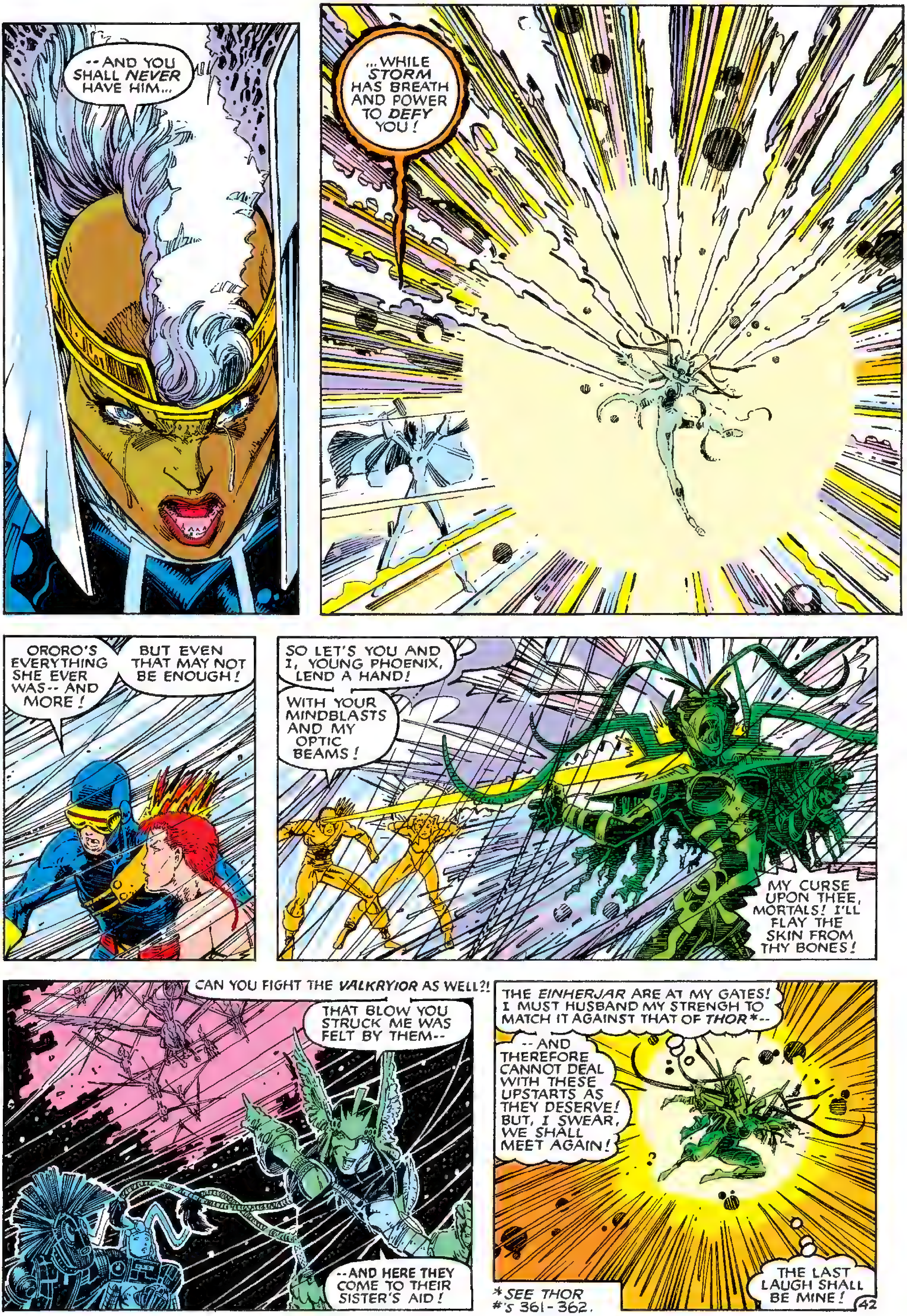
THINE INTERVENTION, YOUTH, WAS NOT ENTIRELY UNEXPECTED.
SNAP!
RUGRI-- DISPOSE OF THESE PETTY ANNOYANCES.
ROCK TROLLS--!
ASGARD'S ANCIENT FOES--?!
TOO MANY OF THESE BUGGERS TO HANDLE ON MY OWN--!
KITTY-- IF YOU HEAR ME, COME A'RUNNIN'!
HOW DARE LOKI SUMMON SUCH AS THESE TO THIS SACRED PLACE?!
I WAS HOPING FOR SOMEWHAT MORE POMP AND CIRCUMSTANCE.
A CELEBRATION TO BEFIT SUCH A GREAT OCCASION.
BUT NEVER MIND--
--THIS ALONE IS WHAT MATTERS.
ORORO-- REACH INTO THE FIRE--
NO!
ORORO-- DON'T!
--TAKE UP THY DESTINY!


FOR NOW AND EVERMORE, WIND-RIDER...
...ART THOU TRULY--
KAH KOWWW
BLAM!
--STORM!
WAHBOOM BADA BOOM!


MAGNIFICENT!
HER HAMMER IS BOUND TO MY POWER BY THE SPELLS THAT FORGE IT...
...AND ORORO TO IT BY HER LIFESBLOOD!
NONE IN THE GOLDEN REALM--NOT EVEN THOR--
--CAN DENY HER THIS PLACE OF HONOR-- *eh?!!*
ORORO--
--YOU'RE BEIN' *SUCKERED!*
BEWARE, WIND-RIDER!
ANOTHER FOE--OF THEE AND ASGARD--
--HIS FOUL SOUL CLOAKED IN THY FRIEND'S FORM!
THEN MY *HAMMER* SHALL STRIP AWAY HIS DECEPTION.
AND REVEAL HIS TRUE NATURE FOR ALL TO SEE!
THIS HURTS--WORSE'N--FLAMIN' POISON!
TAKE YOUR BEST SHOT, DARLIN'--
--I AIN'T ABOUT TO QUIT!
IT CANNOT BE!
HOW CAN ANY SHADOWSPAWN SHOW SUCH COURAGE?!
BUT LOKI IS MY FRIEND.
HE WOULD NOT LIE.
STORM--
--HE'S THE GOD OF LIES--
--THAT'S *ALL HE DOES!*


STAND THOU ASIDE--
--GODDESS OF THE STORM--
--THAT HELA MAY EXECUTE HER RIGHTFUL CHARGE--
--AND CLAIM YON MORTAL HERO'S SOUL!
NO!
THY PROTEST IS TOO LITTLE, TOO LATE.
THINE WAS THE HAND THAT STRUCK HIM DOWN. I DO BUT FINISH WHAT THOU HAST BEGUN.
LEAVE HIM ALONE!!
WHO--?!
DANIELLE MOONSTAR?!!
BACK AWAY, LADY!
I WON'T WARN YOU TWICE!
WOLVERINE'S DYING! WAS THIS WHAT MY VISION MEANT?!
WHAT THE HECK GIVES-- WHERE'D THAT POWER COME FROM-- I COULD NEVER DO ANYTHING LIKE THAT?!!
FOOLISH CHILD. THOU ART A VALKYRIE-- ONE OF ODIN'S WARRIOR-MAIDS, HIS CHOOSERS OF THE SLAIN!
THOU SHOULDST BE STANDING BY MY SIDE-- TO AID ME--
--NOT KEEPING ME FROM MINE APPOINTED TASK.


A--?!?
IS THAT WHO MY FRIEND, *MIST,* AND HER SISTERS--!?!
SPIRITS OF MY ANCESTORS--
--HAVE MERCY!
IF THAT'S WHO I AM-- WHAT MY STAY IN ASGARD HAS MADE ME--
-- THEN, HELA, I CHOOSE TO SLAY *YOU!*
PRESUMPTUOUS GIRL, LET THIS MILD CHASTISEMENT...
...TEACH THEE-- AND ANY OTHER WHO SEEKS TO BAR MY WAY...
"...THY PROPER PLACE."
WHAT HAVE I DONE?!
ORORO--
-- WHATEVER LOKI... OFFERED... NO MATTER... HOW... WONDERFUL...
...WASN'T FOR YOU... BUT FOR HIM!
HE'S *USIN'* YOU, DARLIN'
GIVE ME WHAT I REQUIRE AND I SHALL LEAVE THEE IN PEACE.
WOLVERINE IS NOT DEAD YET, QUEEN OF HEL--


--AND YOU SHALL *NEVER* HAVE HIM...
...WHILE *STORM* HAS BREATH AND POWER TO *DEFY* YOU!
ORORO'S EVERYTHING SHE EVER WAS-- AND MORE!
BUT EVEN THAT MAY NOT BE ENOUGH!
SO LET'S YOU AND I, YOUNG PHOENIX, LEND A HAND!
WITH YOUR MINDBLASTS AND MY OPTIC BEAMS!
MY CURSE UPON THEE, MORTALS! I'LL FLAY THE SKIN FROM THY BONES!
CAN YOU FIGHT THE *VALKRYIOR* AS WELL?!
THAT BLOW YOU STRUCK ME WAS FELT BY THEM--
--AND HERE THEY COME TO THEIR SISTER'S AID!
THE *EINHERJAR* ARE AT MY GATES! I MUST HUSBAND MY STRENGH TO MATCH IT AGAINST THAT OF *THOR**--
--AND THEREFORE CANNOT DEAL WITH THESE UPSTARTS AS THEY DESERVE! BUT, I SWEAR, WE SHALL MEET AGAIN!
THE LAST LAUGH SHALL BE MINE!
*SEE THOR #'s 361-362.
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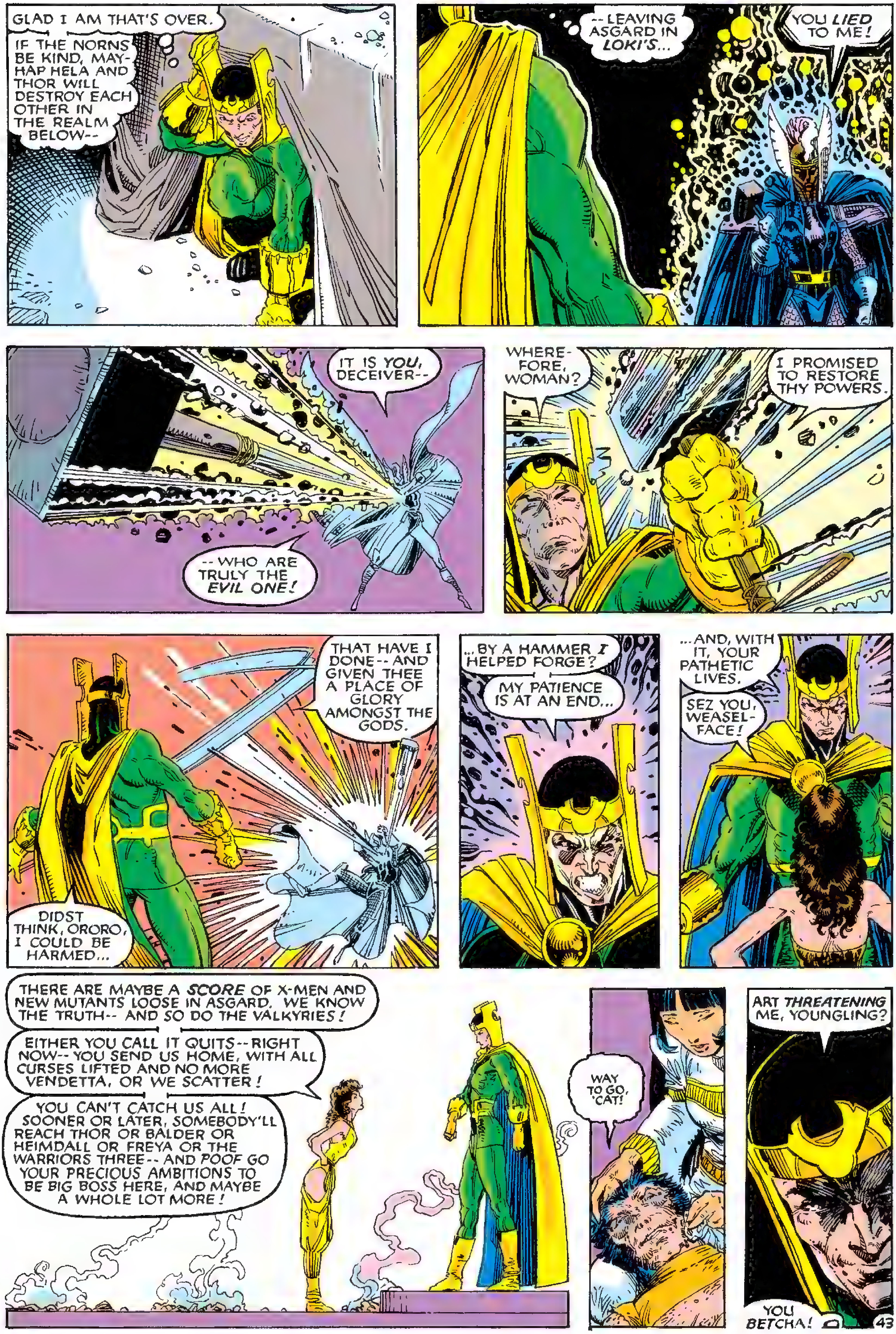
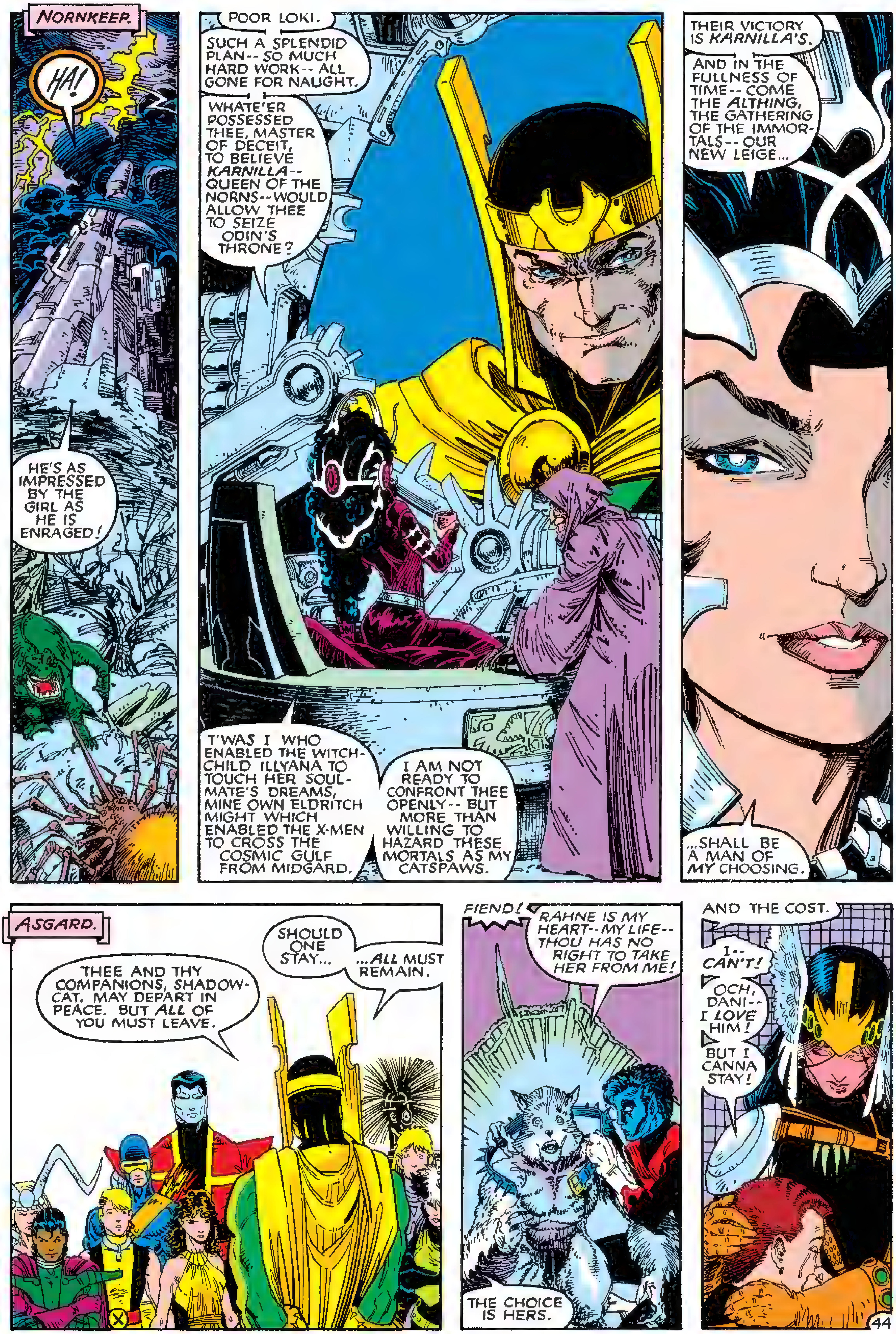

GLAD I AM THAT'S OVER.
IF THE NORNS BE KIND, MAYHAP HELA AND THOR WILL DESTROY EACH OTHER IN THE REALM BELOW--
--LEAVING ASGARD IN *LOKI'S*...
YOU *LIED* TO ME!
IT IS *YOU*, DECEIVER--
--WHO ARE TRULY THE *EVIL ONE!*
WHEREFORE, WOMAN?
I PROMISED TO RESTORE THY POWERS.
THAT HAVE I DONE--AND GIVEN THEE A PLACE OF GLORY AMONGST THE GODS.
DIDST THINK, ORORO, I COULD BE HARMED...
...BY A HAMMER *I* HELPED FORGE?
MY PATIENCE IS AT AN END...
...AND, WITH IT, YOUR PATHETIC LIVES.
SEZ YOU, WEASEL-FACE!
THERE ARE MAYBE A *SCORE* OF X-MEN AND NEW MUTANTS LOOSE IN ASGARD. WE KNOW THE TRUTH-- AND SO DO THE VALKYRIES!
EITHER YOU CALL IT QUITS--RIGHT NOW--YOU SEND US HOME, WITH ALL CURSES LIFTED AND NO MORE VENDETTA, OR WE SCATTER!
YOU CAN'T CATCH US ALL! SOONER OR LATER, SOMEBODY'LL REACH THOR OR BALDER OR HEIMDALL OR FREYA OR THE WARRIORS THREE-- AND *POOF* GO YOUR PRECIOUS AMBITIONS TO BE BIG BOSS HERE, AND MAYBE A WHOLE LOT MORE!
WAY TO GO, 'CAT!
ART *THREATENING* ME, YOUNGLING?
YOU *BETCHA!*


NORNKEEP.
HA!
HE'S AS IMPRESSED BY THE GIRL AS HE IS ENRAGED!
POOR LOKI.
SUCH A SPLENDID PLAN-- SO MUCH HARD WORK-- ALL GONE FOR NAUGHT.
WHATE'ER POSSESSED THEE, MASTER OF DECEIT, TO BELIEVE KARNILLA-- QUEEN OF THE NORNS--WOULD ALLOW THEE TO SEIZE ODIN'S THRONE?
T'WAS I WHO ENABLED THE WITCH-CHILD ILLYANA TO TOUCH HER SOUL-MATE'S DREAMS, MINE OWN ELDRITCH MIGHT WHICH ENABLED THE X-MEN TO CROSS THE COSMIC GULF FROM MIDGARD.
I AM NOT READY TO CONFRONT THEE OPENLY-- BUT MORE THAN WILLING TO HAZARD THESE MORTALS AS MY CATSPAWS.
THEIR VICTORY IS KARNILLA'S.
AND IN THE FULLNESS OF TIME-- COME THE ALTHING, THE GATHERING OF THE IMMORTALS-- OUR NEW LEIGE...
...SHALL BE A MAN OF MY CHOOSING.
ASGARD.
THEE AND THY COMPANIONS, SHADOWCAT, MAY DEPART IN PEACE. BUT ALL OF YOU MUST LEAVE.
SHOULD ONE STAY...
...ALL MUST REMAIN.
FIEND!
RAHNE IS MY HEART--MY LIFE-- THOU HAS NO RIGHT TO TAKE HER FROM ME!
THE CHOICE IS HERS.
AND THE COST.
I-- CAN'T!
OCH, DANI-- I LOVE HIM!
BUT I CANNA STAY!
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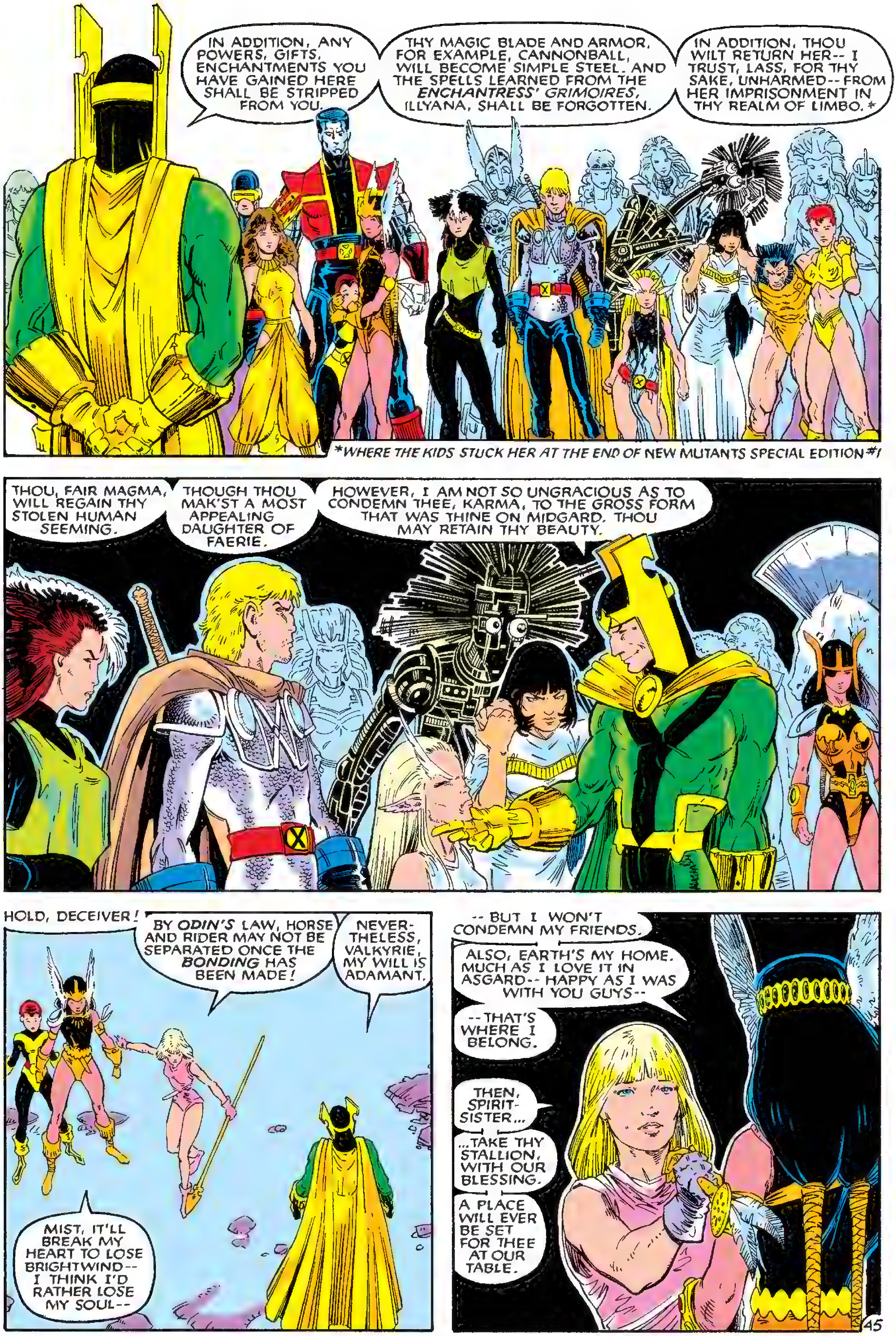
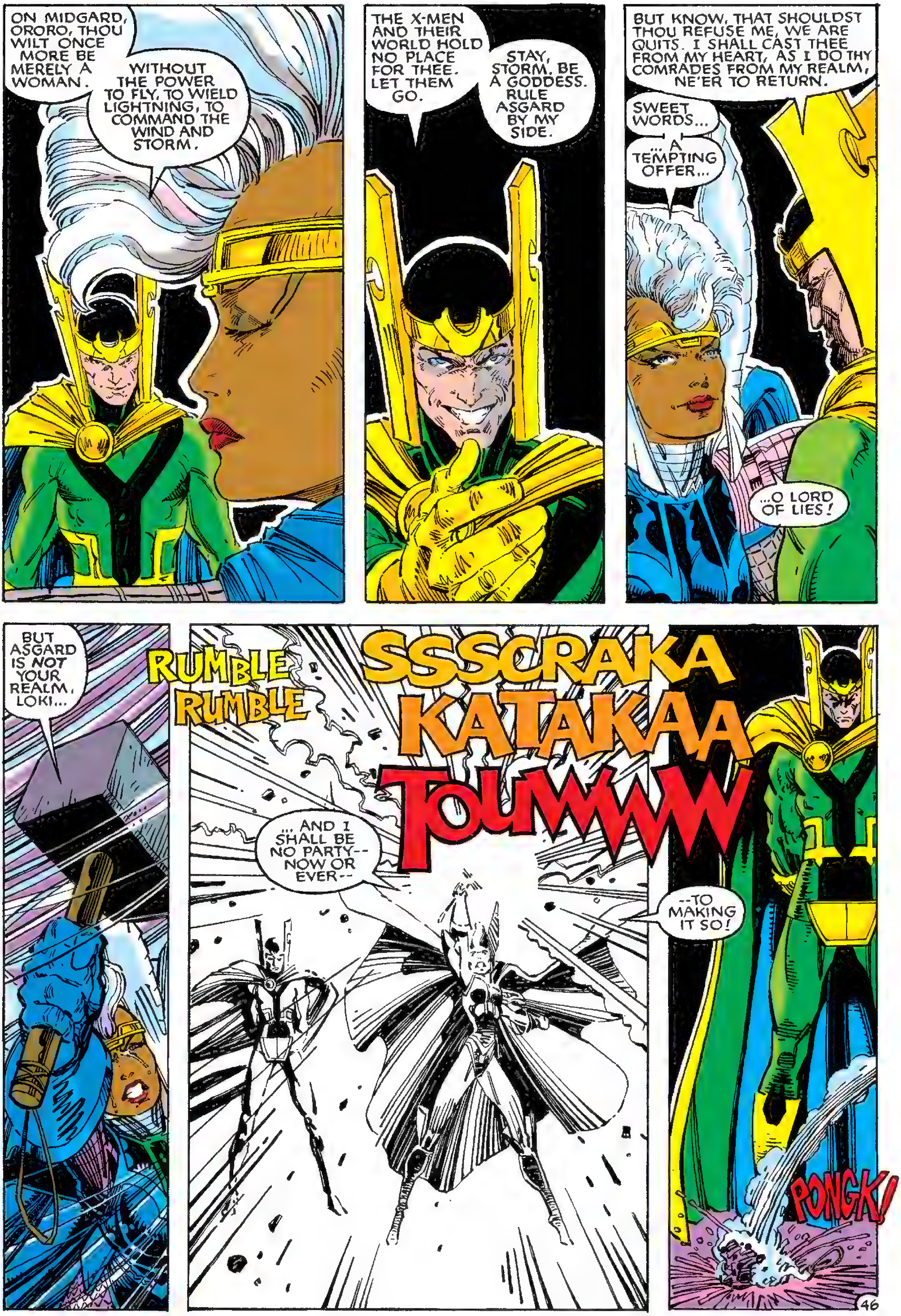
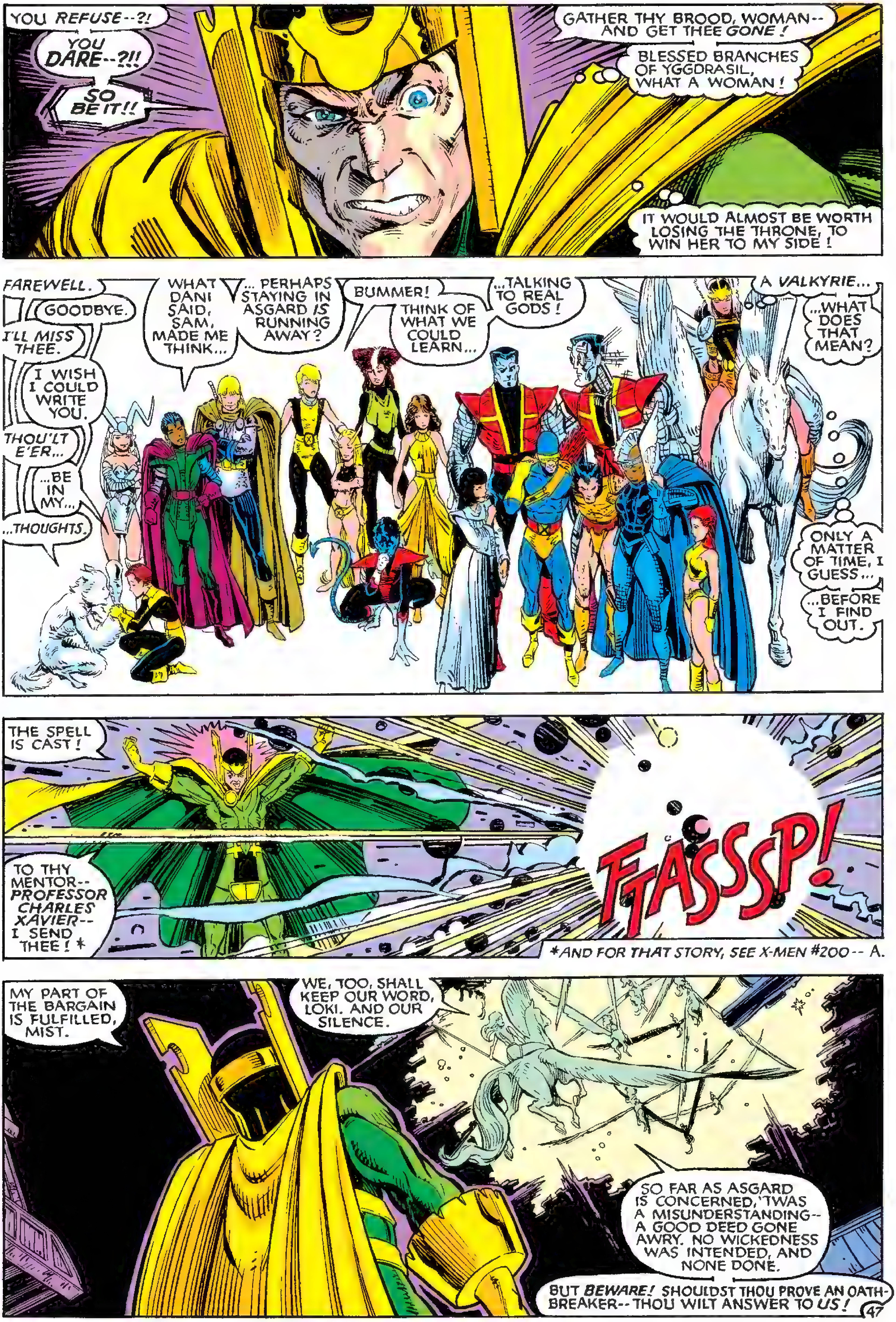
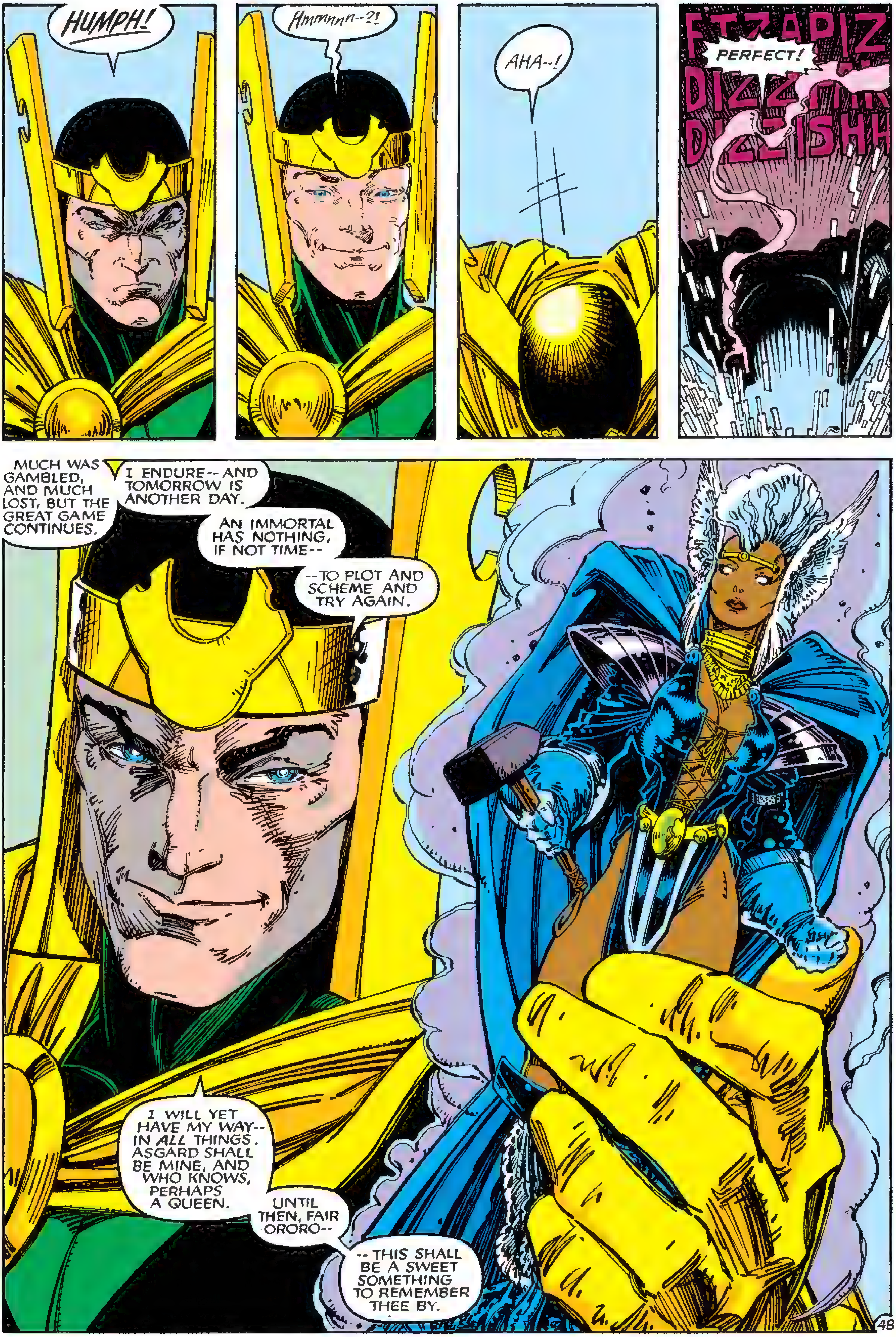

IN ADDITION, ANY POWERS, GIFTS, ENCHANTMENTS YOU HAVE GAINED HERE SHALL BE STRIPPED FROM YOU.
THY MAGIC BLADE AND ARMOR, FOR EXAMPLE, CANNONBALL, WILL BECOME SIMPLE STEEL. AND THE SPELLS LEARNED FROM THE *ENCHANTRESS' GRIMOIRES*, ILLYANA, SHALL BE FORGOTTEN.
IN ADDITION, THOU WILT RETURN HER-- I TRUST, LASS, FOR THY SAKE, UNHARMED--FROM HER IMPRISONMENT IN THY REALM OF LIMBO.*
*WHERE THE KIDS STUCK HER AT THE END OF NEW MUTANTS SPECIAL EDITION #1
THOU, FAIR MAGMA, WILL REGAIN THY STOLEN HUMAN SEEMING.
THOUGH THOU MAK'ST A MOST APPEALING DAUGHTER OF FAERIE.
HOWEVER, I AM NOT SO UNGRACIOUS AS TO CONDEMN THEE, KARMA, TO THE GROSS FORM THAT WAS THINE ON MIDGARD. THOU MAY RETAIN THY BEAUTY.
HOLD, DECEIVER!
BY *ODIN'S* LAW, HORSE AND RIDER MAY NOT BE SEPARATED ONCE THE *BONDING* HAS BEEN MADE!
NEVERTHELESS, VALKYRIE, MY WILL IS ADAMANT.
MIST, IT'LL BREAK MY HEART TO LOSE BRIGHTWIND-- I THINK I'D RATHER LOSE MY SOUL--
-- BUT I WON'T CONDEMN MY FRIENDS.
ALSO, EARTH'S MY HOME. MUCH AS I LOVE IT IN ASGARD-- HAPPY AS I WAS WITH YOU GUYS--
--THAT'S WHERE I BELONG.
THEN, *SPIRIT-SISTER*...
...TAKE THY STALLION, WITH OUR BLESSING.
A PLACE WILL EVER BE SET FOR THEE AT OUR TABLE.


ON MIDGARD, ORORO, THOU WILT ONCE MORE BE MERELY A WOMAN.
WITHOUT THE POWER TO FLY, TO WIELD LIGHTNING, TO COMMAND THE WIND AND STORM.
THE X-MEN AND THEIR WORLD HOLD NO PLACE FOR THEE. LET THEM GO.
STAY, STORM. BE A GODDESS. RULE ASGARD BY MY SIDE.
BUT KNOW, THAT SHOULDST THOU REFUSE ME, WE ARE QUITS. I SHALL CAST THEE FROM MY HEART, AS I DO THY COMRADES FROM MY REALM, NE'ER TO RETURN.
SWEET WORDS...
...A TEMPTING OFFER...
...O LORD OF LIES!
BUT ASGARD IS *NOT* YOUR REALM, LOKI...
RUMBLE RUMBLE
SSSCRAKA KATAKAA TOUMMM
...AND I SHALL BE NO PARTY-- NOW OR EVER--
--TO MAKING IT SO!
PONGK!


YOU *REFUSE*--?!
YOU *DARE*--?!!
SO BE IT!!
GATHER THY BROOD, WOMAN-- AND GET THEE *GONE*!
BLESSED BRANCHES OF YGGDRASIL, WHAT A WOMAN!
IT WOULD ALMOST BE WORTH LOSING THE THRONE, TO WIN HER TO MY SIDE!
FAREWELL.
GOODBYE.
I'LL MISS THEE.
I WISH I COULD WRITE YOU.
THOU'LT E'ER...
...BE IN MY...
...THOUGHTS.
WHAT DANI SAID, SAM, MADE ME THINK...
...PERHAPS STAYING IN ASGARD *IS* RUNNING AWAY?
BUMMER!
THINK OF WHAT WE COULD LEARN...
...TALKING TO REAL GODS!
A *VALKYRIE*...
...WHAT DOES THAT MEAN?
ONLY A MATTER OF TIME, I GUESS...
...BEFORE I FIND OUT.
THE SPELL IS CAST!
TO THY MENTOR-- *PROFESSOR CHARLES XAVIER*-- I SEND THEE! *
FTASSSP!
MY PART OF THE BARGAIN IS FULFILLED, MIST.
WE, TOO, SHALL KEEP OUR WORD, LOKI. AND OUR SILENCE.
SO FAR AS ASGARD IS CONCERNED, 'TWAS A MISUNDERSTANDING-- A GOOD DEED GONE AWRY. NO WICKEDNESS WAS INTENDED, AND NONE DONE.
BUT *BEWARE!* SHOULDST THOU PROVE AN OATH-BREAKER-- THOU WILT ANSWER TO *US*!

**AND FOR THAT STORY, SEE X-MEN #200 -- A.*


HUMPH!
Hmmnnn--?!
AHA--!
FTZAPIZ
DIZZ
DIZZISHH
PERFECT!
MUCH WAS GAMBLED, AND MUCH LOST, BUT THE GREAT GAME CONTINUES.
I ENDURE-- AND TOMORROW IS ANOTHER DAY.
AN IMMORTAL HAS NOTHING, IF NOT TIME--
--TO PLOT AND SCHEME AND TRY AGAIN.
I WILL YET HAVE MY WAY-- IN ALL THINGS. ASGARD SHALL BE MINE, AND WHO KNOWS, PERHAPS A QUEEN.
UNTIL THEN, FAIR ORORO--
-- THIS SHALL BE A SWEET SOMETHING TO REMEMBER THEE BY.

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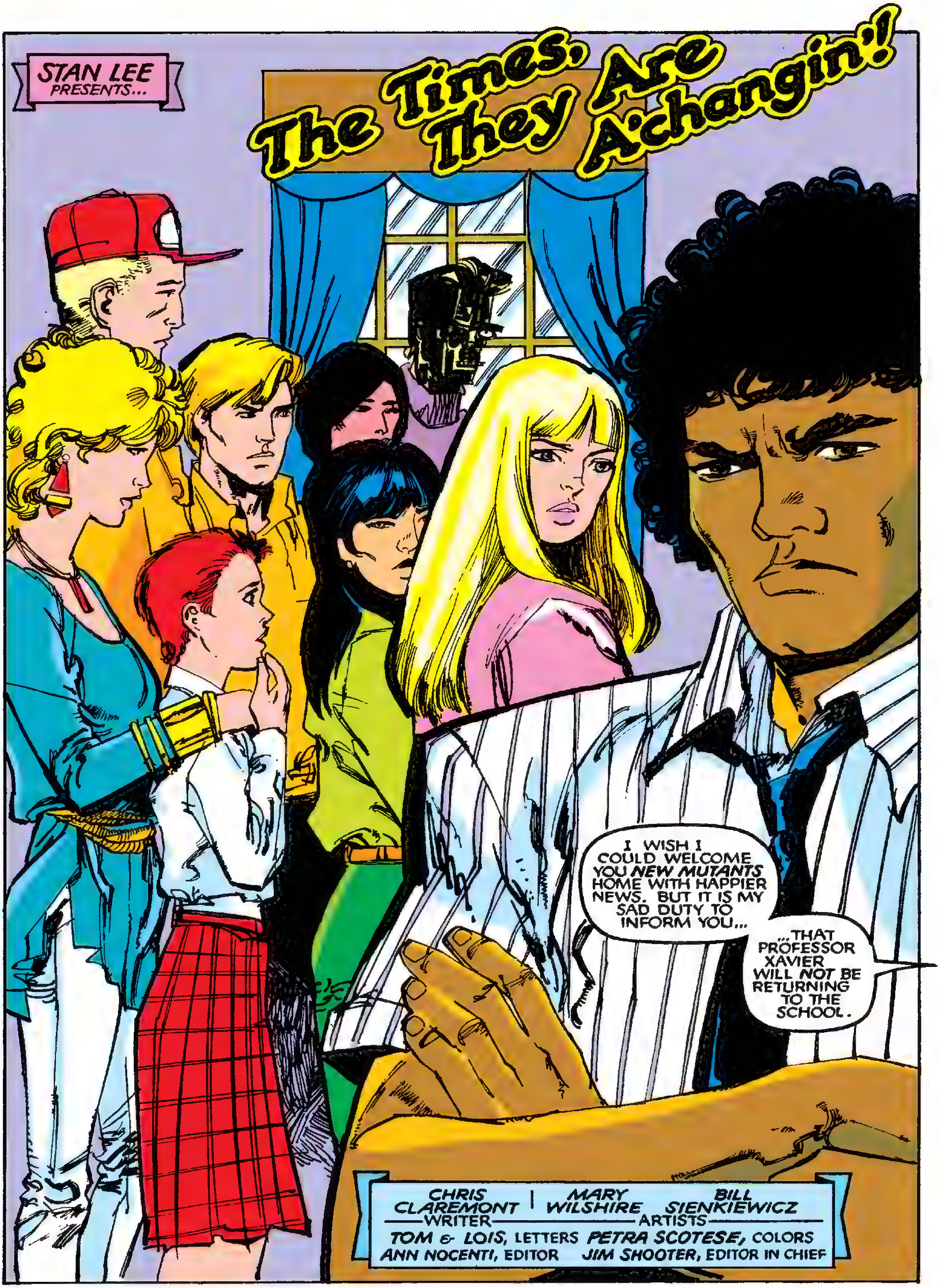
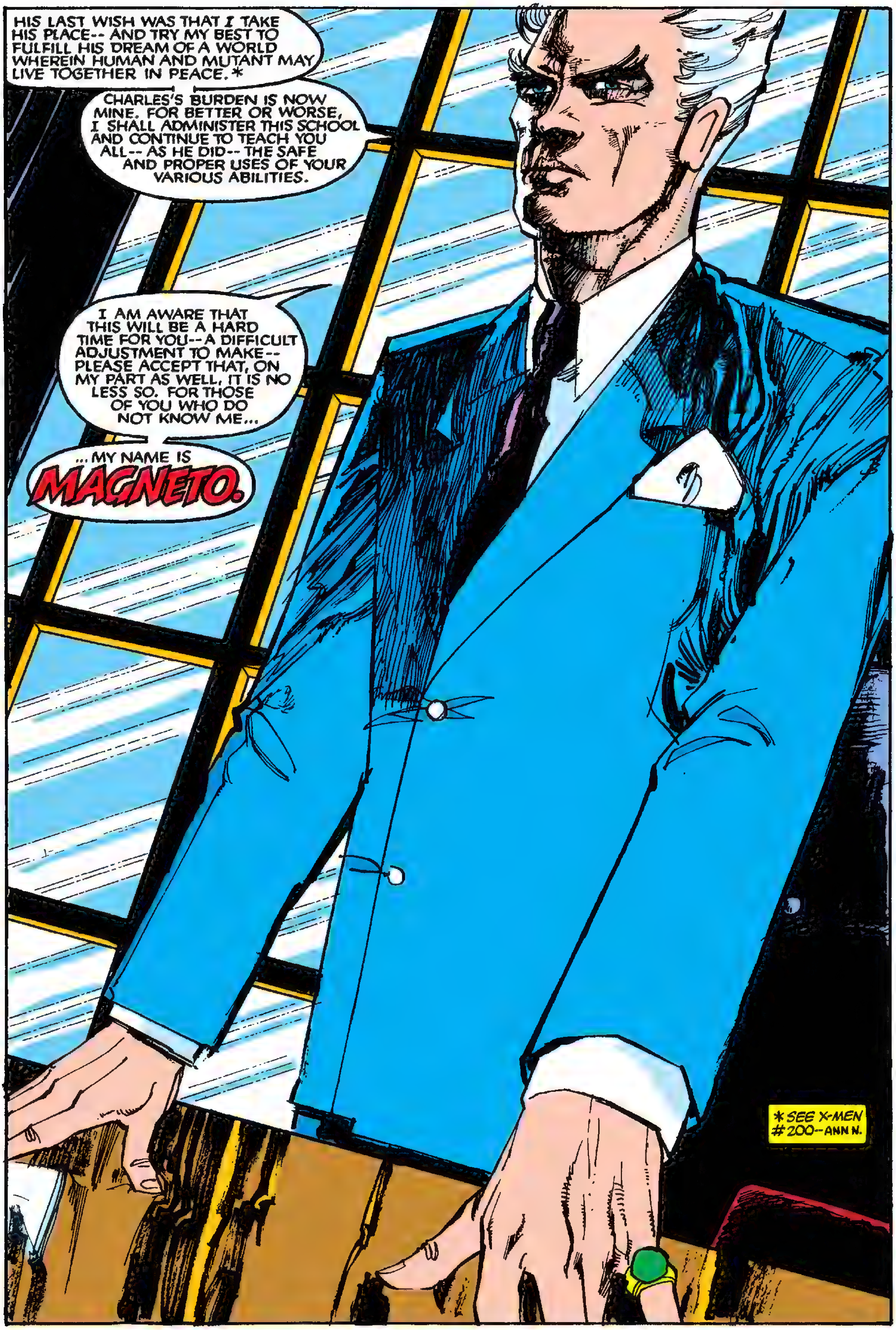
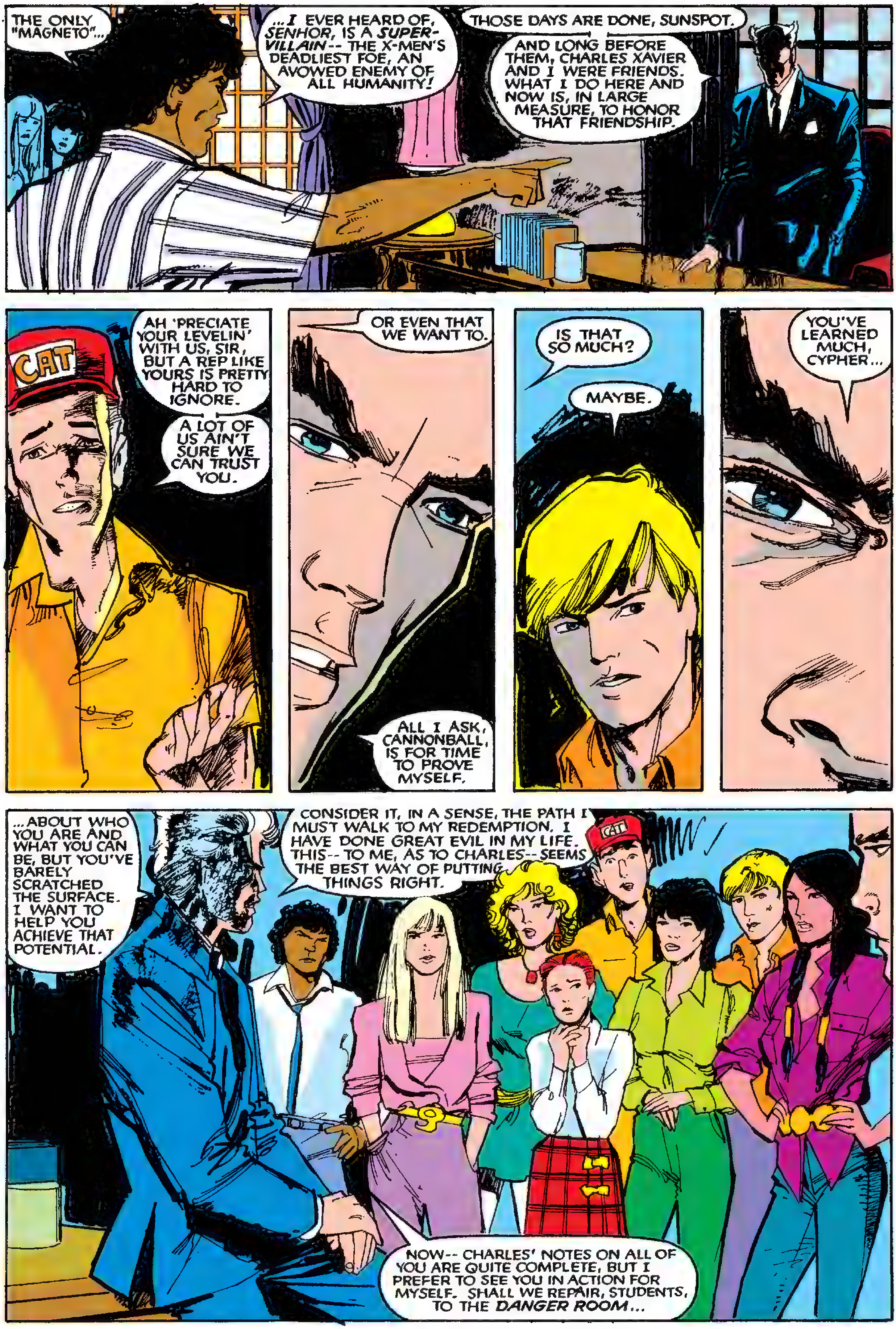
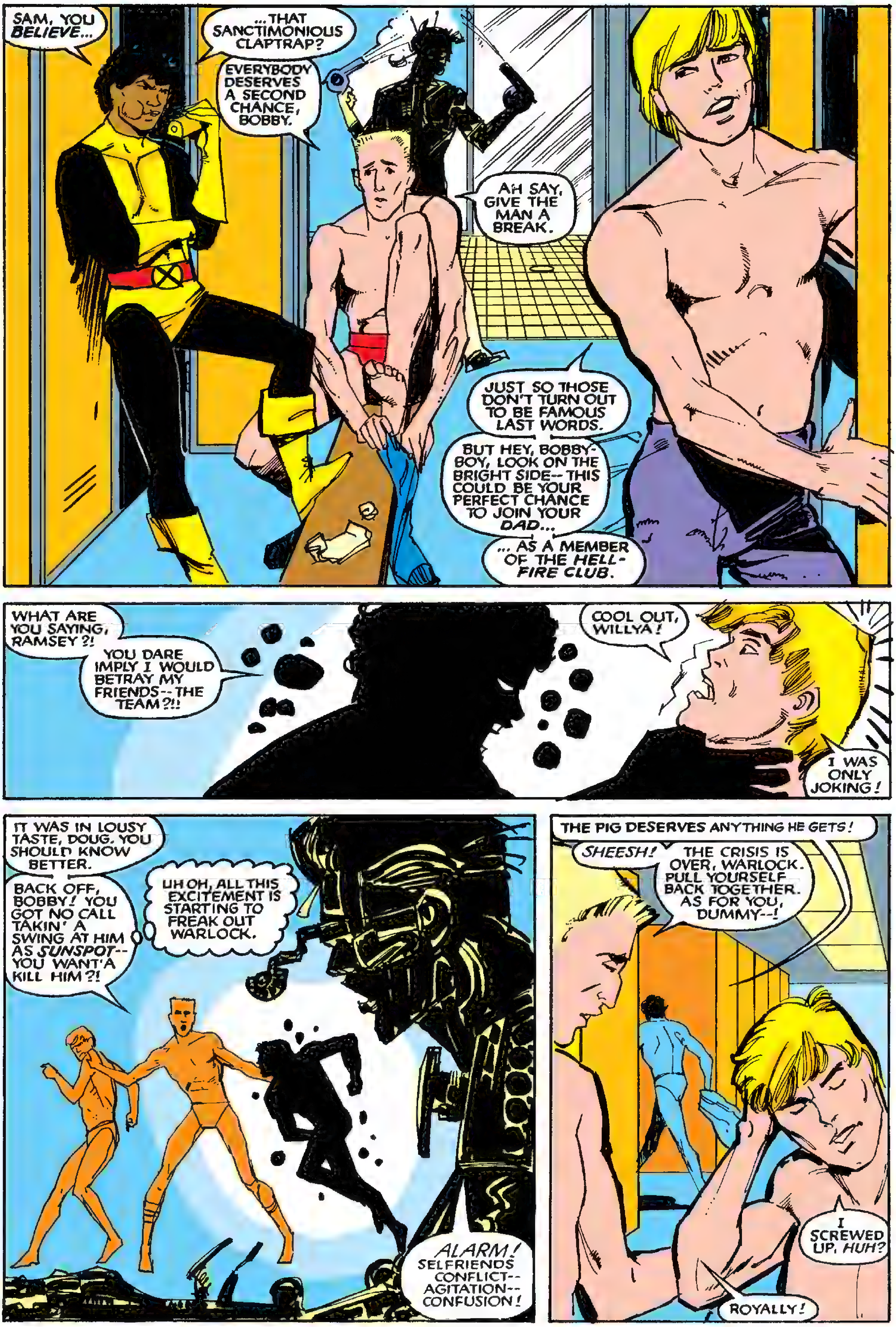
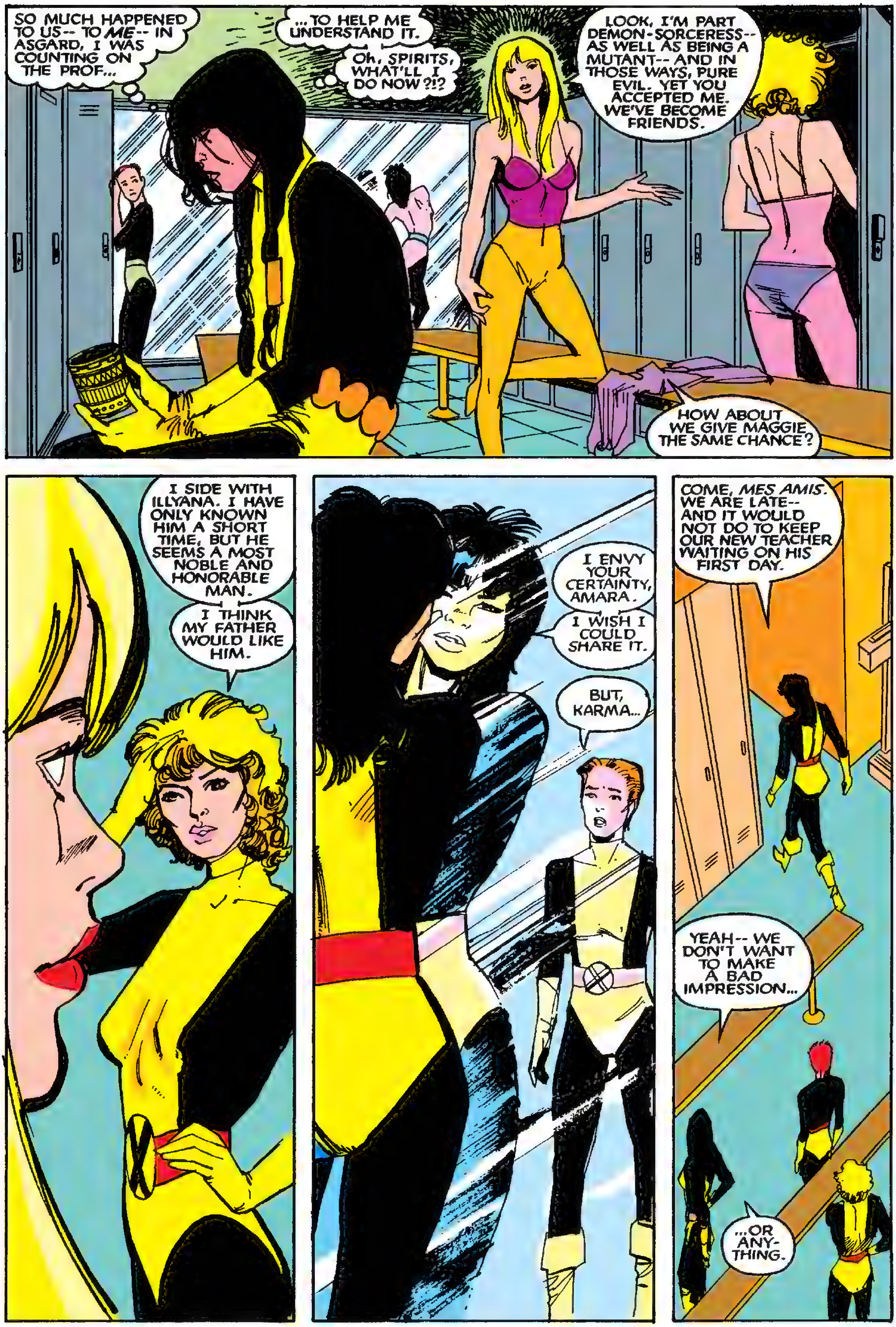
THE · NEW
MUTANTS™
MAGNETO'S IN CHARGE!
THE SCHOOL WILL NEVER BE THE SAME
M.W.

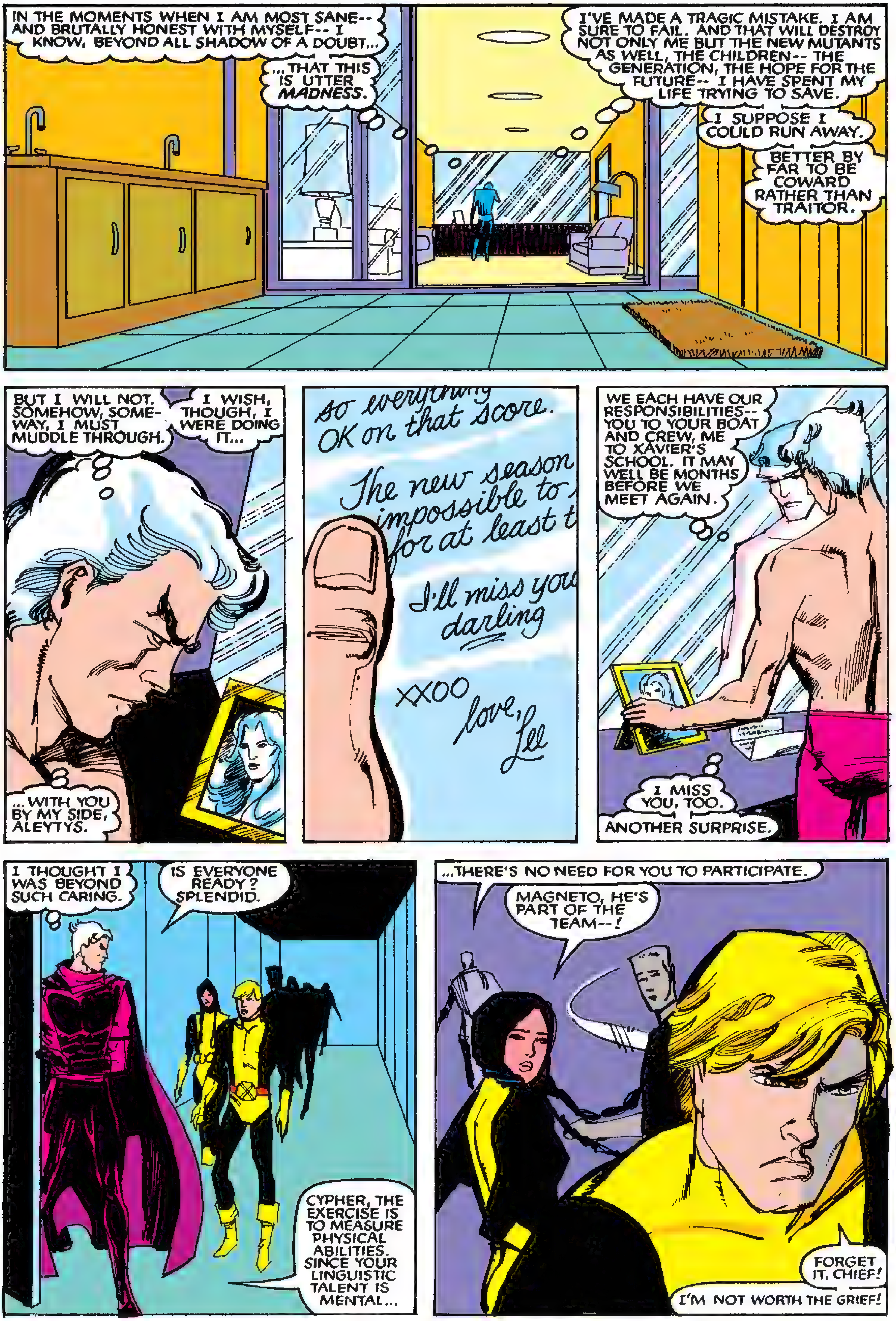

STAN LEE PRESENTS...
The Times, They Are A'changin'!
I WISH I COULD WELCOME YOU *NEW MUTANTS* HOME WITH HAPPIER NEWS. BUT IT IS MY SAD DUTY TO INFORM YOU...
...THAT PROFESSOR XAVIER WILL *NOT* BE RETURNING TO THE SCHOOL.
CHRIS CLAREMONT — WRITER | MARY WILSHIRE, BILL SIENKIEWICZ — ARTISTS
TOM & LOIS, LETTERS PETRA SCOTESE, COLORS
ANN NOCENTI, EDITOR JIM SHOOTER, EDITOR IN CHIEF

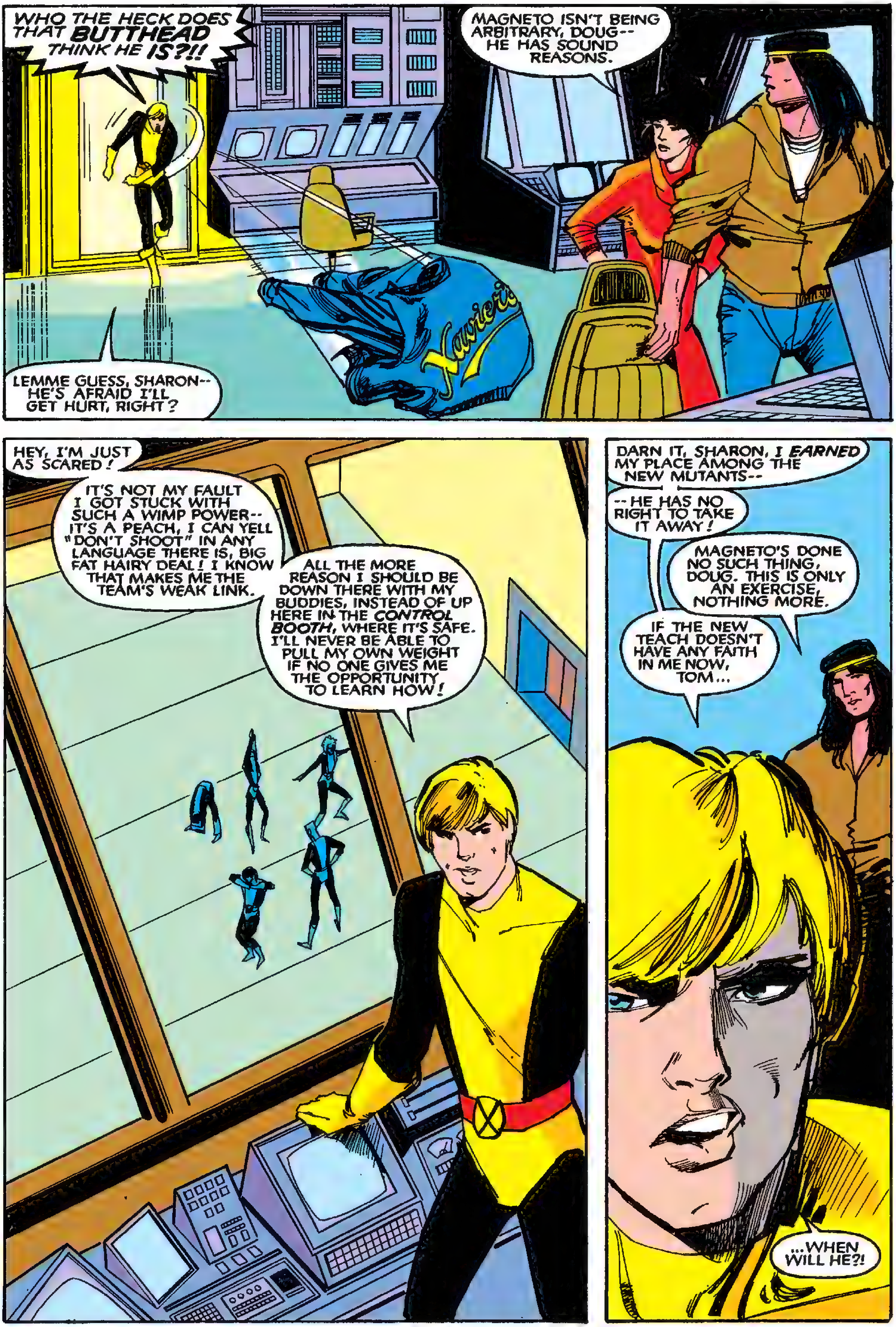

HIS LAST WISH WAS THAT *I* TAKE HIS PLACE-- AND TRY MY BEST TO FULFILL HIS DREAM OF A WORLD WHEREIN HUMAN AND MUTANT MAY LIVE TOGETHER IN PEACE.*
CHARLES'S BURDEN IS NOW MINE. FOR BETTER OR WORSE, I SHALL ADMINISTER THIS SCHOOL AND CONTINUE TO TEACH YOU ALL-- AS HE DID-- THE SAFE AND PROPER USES OF YOUR VARIOUS ABILITIES.
I AM AWARE THAT THIS WILL BE A HARD TIME FOR YOU--A DIFFICULT ADJUSTMENT TO MAKE-- PLEASE ACCEPT THAT, ON MY PART AS WELL, IT IS NO LESS SO. FOR THOSE OF YOU WHO DO NOT KNOW ME...
...MY NAME IS MAGNETO.
*SEE X-MEN #200--ANN N.

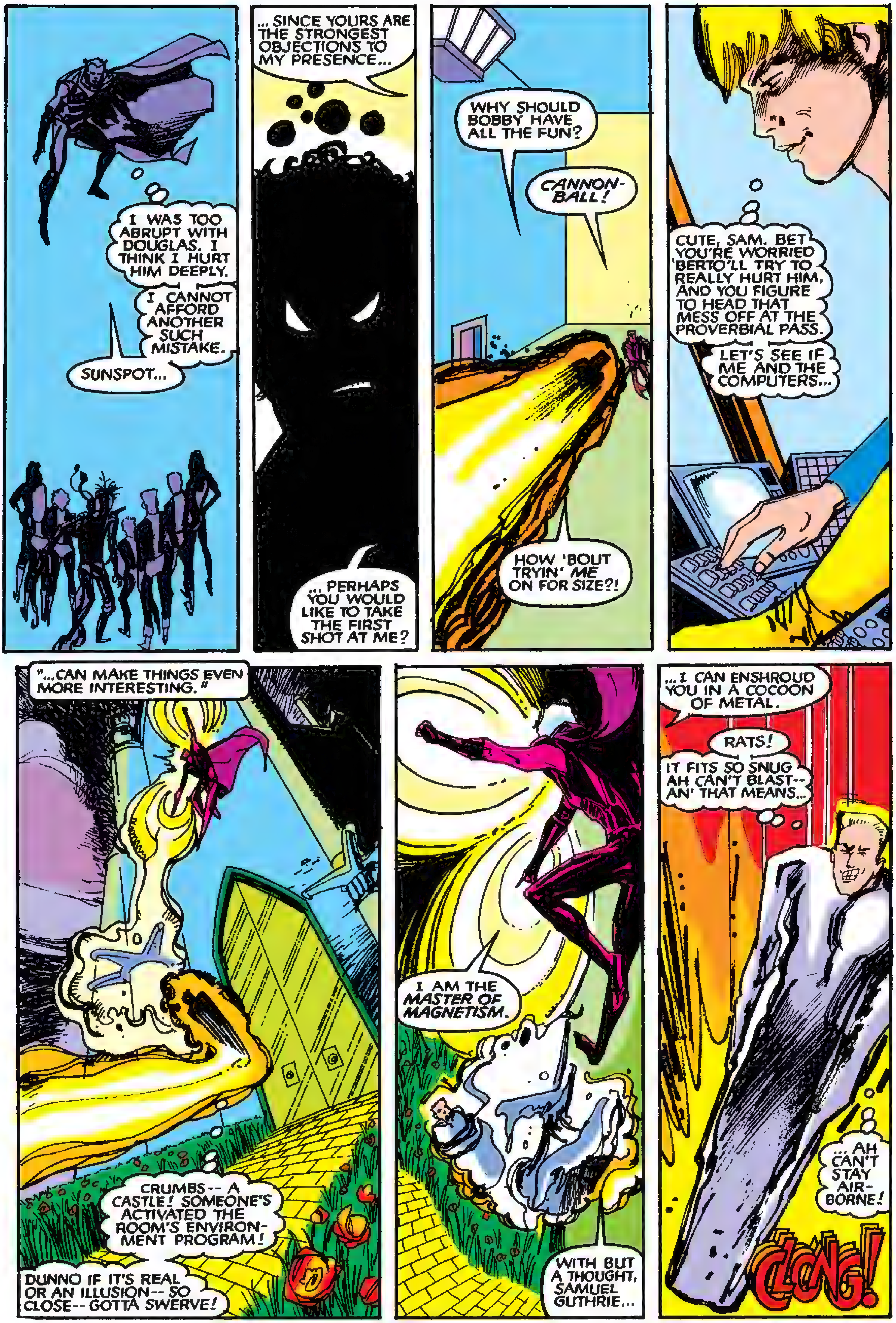

THE ONLY "MAGNETO"...
...I EVER HEARD OF, SENHOR, IS A SUPER-VILLAIN -- THE X-MEN'S DEADLIEST FOE, AN AVOWED ENEMY OF ALL HUMANITY!
THOSE DAYS ARE DONE, SUNSPOT.
AND LONG BEFORE THEM, CHARLES XAVIER AND I WERE FRIENDS. WHAT I DO HERE AND NOW IS, IN LARGE MEASURE, TO HONOR THAT FRIENDSHIP.
AH 'PRECIATE YOUR LEVELIN' WITH US, SIR, BUT A REP LIKE YOURS IS PRETTY HARD TO IGNORE.
A LOT OF US AIN'T SURE WE CAN TRUST YOU.
OR EVEN THAT WE WANT TO.
ALL I ASK, CANNONBALL, IS FOR TIME TO PROVE MYSELF.
IS THAT SO MUCH?
MAYBE.
YOU'VE LEARNED MUCH, CYPHER...
...ABOUT WHO YOU ARE AND WHAT YOU CAN BE, BUT YOU'VE BARELY SCRATCHED THE SURFACE. I WANT TO HELP YOU ACHIEVE THAT POTENTIAL.
CONSIDER IT, IN A SENSE, THE PATH I MUST WALK TO MY REDEMPTION. I HAVE DONE GREAT EVIL IN MY LIFE. THIS -- TO ME, AS TO CHARLES -- SEEMS THE BEST WAY OF PUTTING THINGS RIGHT.
NOW -- CHARLES' NOTES ON ALL OF YOU ARE QUITE COMPLETE, BUT I PREFER TO SEE YOU IN ACTION FOR MYSELF. SHALL WE REPAIR, STUDENTS, TO THE DANGER ROOM...

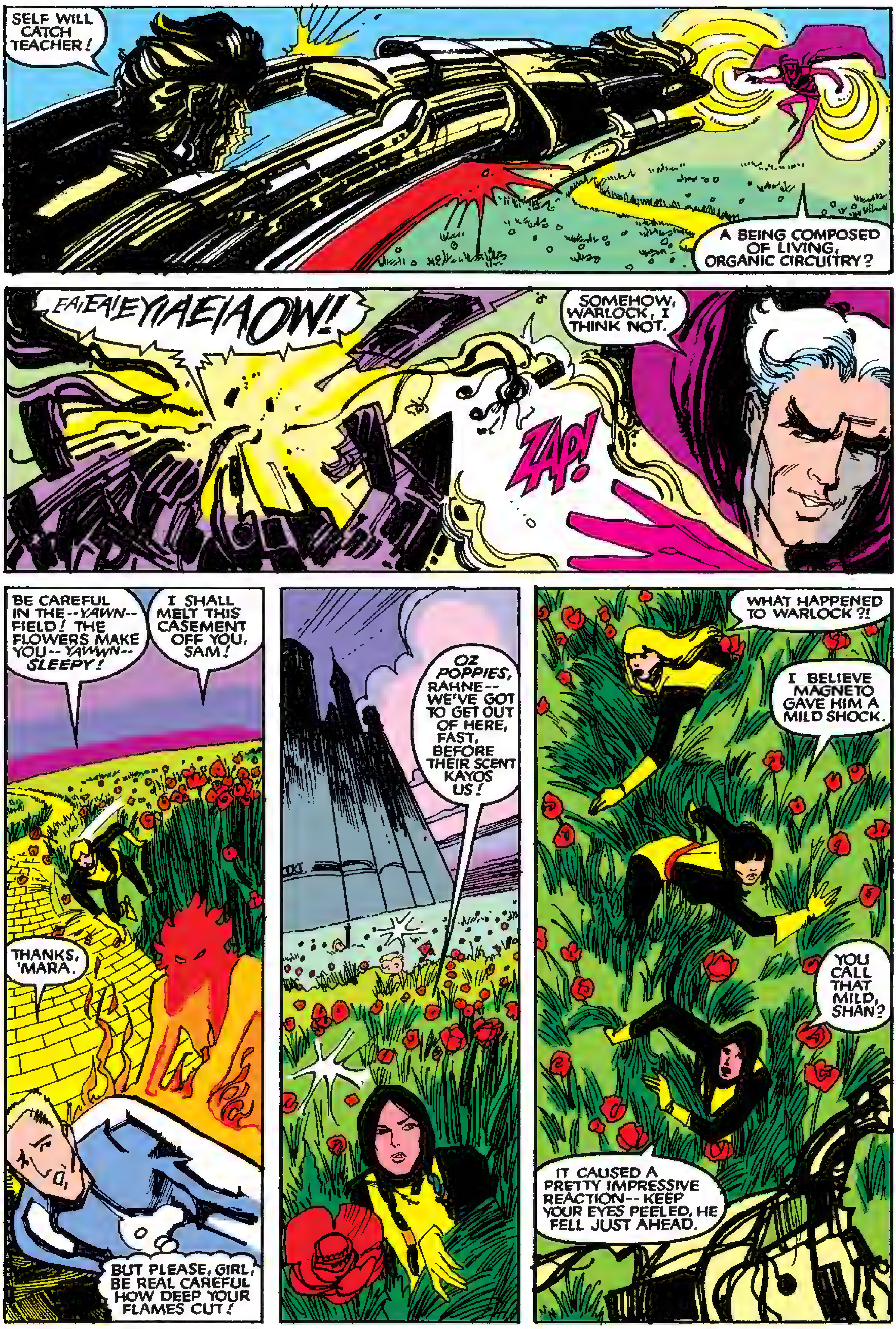

SAM, YOU *BELIEVE*...
...THAT SANCTIMONIOUS CLAPTRAP?
EVERYBODY DESERVES A SECOND CHANCE, BOBBY.
AH SAY, GIVE THE MAN A BREAK.
JUST SO THOSE DON'T TURN OUT TO BE FAMOUS LAST WORDS.
BUT HEY, BOBBY-BOY, LOOK ON THE BRIGHT SIDE-- THIS COULD BE YOUR PERFECT CHANCE TO JOIN YOUR *DAD*...
... AS A MEMBER OF THE *HELL-FIRE CLUB*.
WHAT ARE YOU SAYING, RAMSEY ?!
YOU DARE IMPLY I WOULD BETRAY MY FRIENDS-- THE TEAM ?!!
COOL OUT, WILLYA!
I WAS ONLY JOKING!
IT WAS IN LOUSY TASTE, DOUG. YOU SHOULD KNOW BETTER.
BACK OFF, BOBBY! YOU GOT NO CALL TAKIN' A SWING AT HIM AS *SUNSPOT*-- YOU WANT'A KILL HIM ?!
UH OH, ALL THIS EXCITEMENT IS STARTING TO FREAK OUT WARLOCK.
ALARM! SELFRIENDS CONFLICT-- AGITATION-- CONFUSION!
THE PIG DESERVES ANYTHING HE GETS!
SHEESH!
THE CRISIS IS OVER, WARLOCK. PULL YOURSELF BACK TOGETHER. AS FOR YOU, DUMMY--!
I SCREWED UP, *HUH?*
ROYALLY!

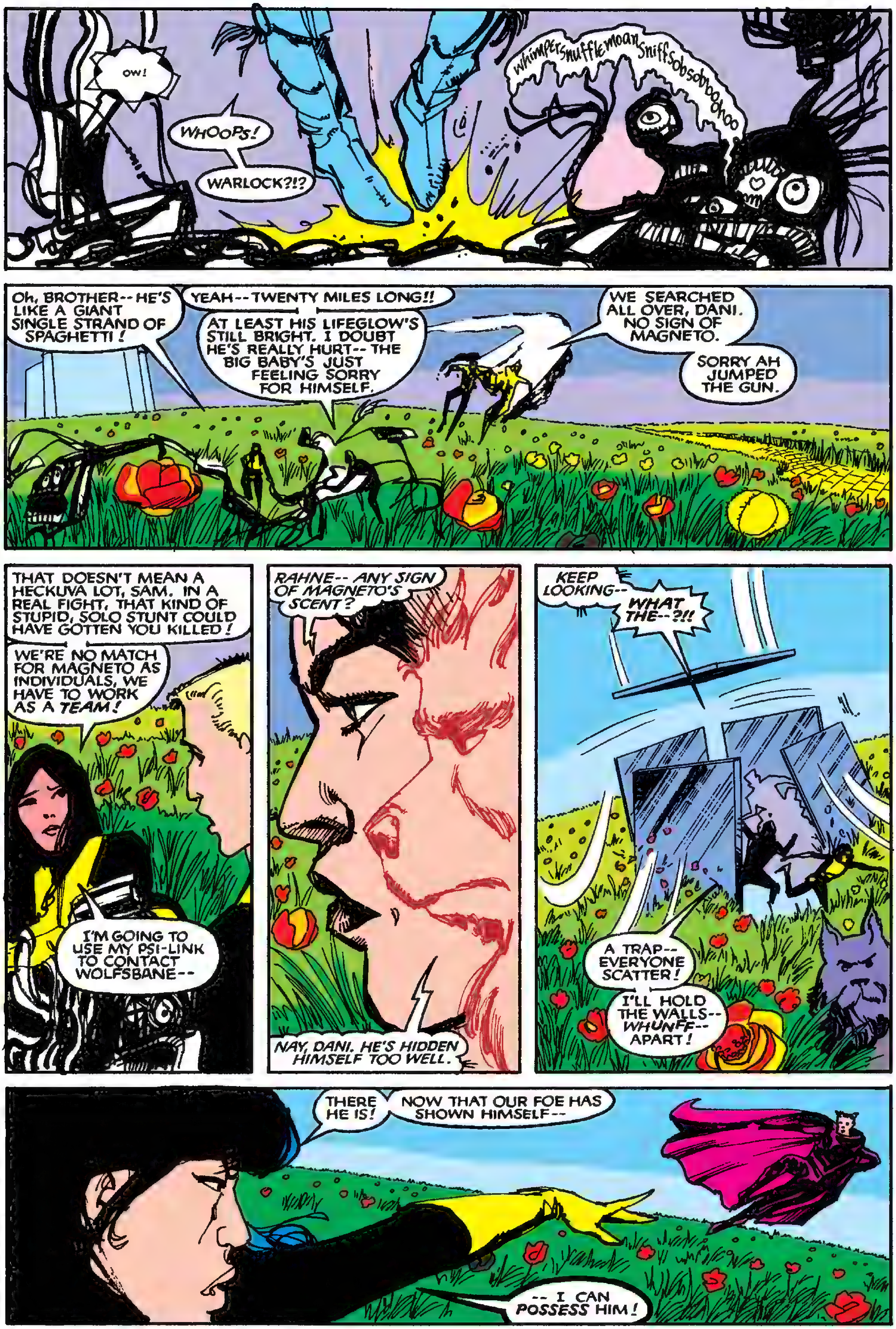

SO MUCH HAPPENED TO US-- TO *ME*-- IN ASGARD, I WAS COUNTING ON THE PROF...
...TO HELP ME UNDERSTAND IT.
Oh, SPIRITS, WHAT'LL I DO NOW?!?
LOOK, I'M PART DEMON-SORCERESS-- AS WELL AS BEING A MUTANT-- AND IN THOSE WAYS, PURE EVIL. YET YOU ACCEPTED ME. WE'VE BECOME FRIENDS.
HOW ABOUT WE GIVE MAGGIE THE SAME CHANCE?
I SIDE WITH ILLYANA. I HAVE ONLY KNOWN HIM A SHORT TIME, BUT HE SEEMS A MOST NOBLE AND HONORABLE MAN.
I THINK MY FATHER WOULD LIKE HIM.
I ENVY YOUR CERTAINTY, AMARA.
I WISH I COULD SHARE IT.
BUT, KARMA...
COME, *MES AMIS*. WE ARE LATE-- AND IT WOULD NOT DO TO KEEP OUR NEW TEACHER WAITING ON HIS FIRST DAY.
YEAH-- WE DON'T WANT TO MAKE A BAD IMPRESSION...
...OR ANYTHING.

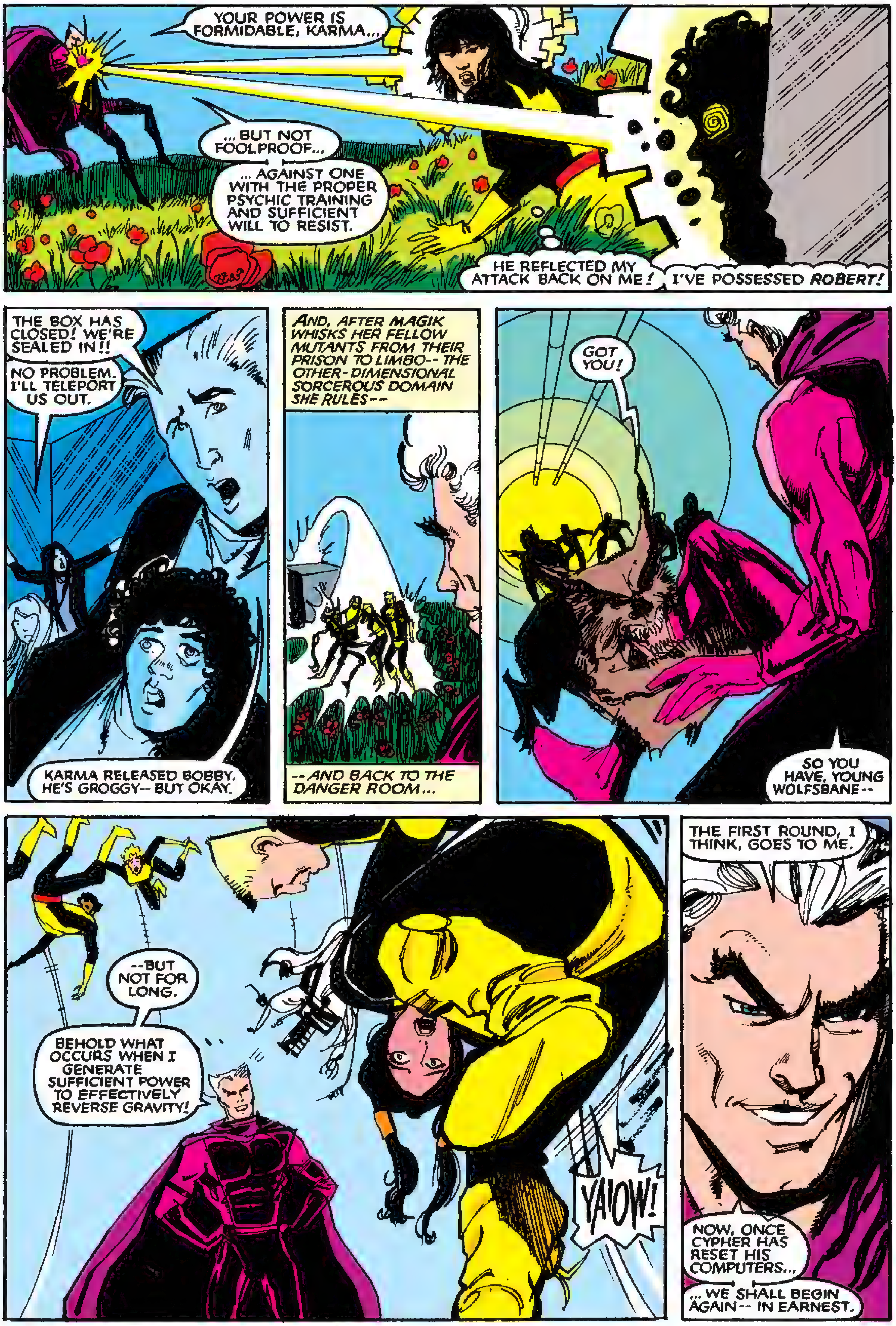

IN THE MOMENTS WHEN I AM MOST SANE-- AND BRUTALLY HONEST WITH MYSELF-- I KNOW, BEYOND ALL SHADOW OF A DOUBT...
...THAT THIS IS UTTER *MADNESS*.
I'VE MADE A TRAGIC MISTAKE. I AM SURE TO FAIL. AND THAT WILL DESTROY NOT ONLY ME BUT THE NEW MUTANTS AS WELL, THE CHILDREN-- THE GENERATION, THE HOPE FOR THE FUTURE-- I HAVE SPENT MY LIFE TRYING TO SAVE.
I SUPPOSE I COULD RUN AWAY.
BETTER BY FAR TO BE COWARD RATHER THAN TRAITOR.
BUT I WILL NOT. SOMEHOW, SOMEWAY, I MUST MUDDLE THROUGH.
I WISH, THOUGH, I WERE DOING IT...
...WITH YOU BY MY SIDE, ALEYTYS.
so everything OK on that score.
The new season impossible to for at least t
I'll miss you darling
XXOO love, Lee
WE EACH HAVE OUR RESPONSIBILITIES-- YOU TO YOUR BOAT AND CREW, ME TO XAVIER'S SCHOOL. IT MAY WELL BE MONTHS BEFORE WE MEET AGAIN.
I MISS YOU, TOO.
ANOTHER SURPRISE.
I THOUGHT I WAS BEYOND SUCH CARING.
IS EVERYONE READY? SPLENDID.
CYPHER, THE EXERCISE IS TO MEASURE PHYSICAL ABILITIES. SINCE YOUR LINGUISTIC TALENT IS MENTAL...
...THERE'S NO NEED FOR YOU TO PARTICIPATE.
MAGNETO, HE'S PART OF THE TEAM--!
FORGET IT, CHIEF!
I'M NOT WORTH THE GRIEF!

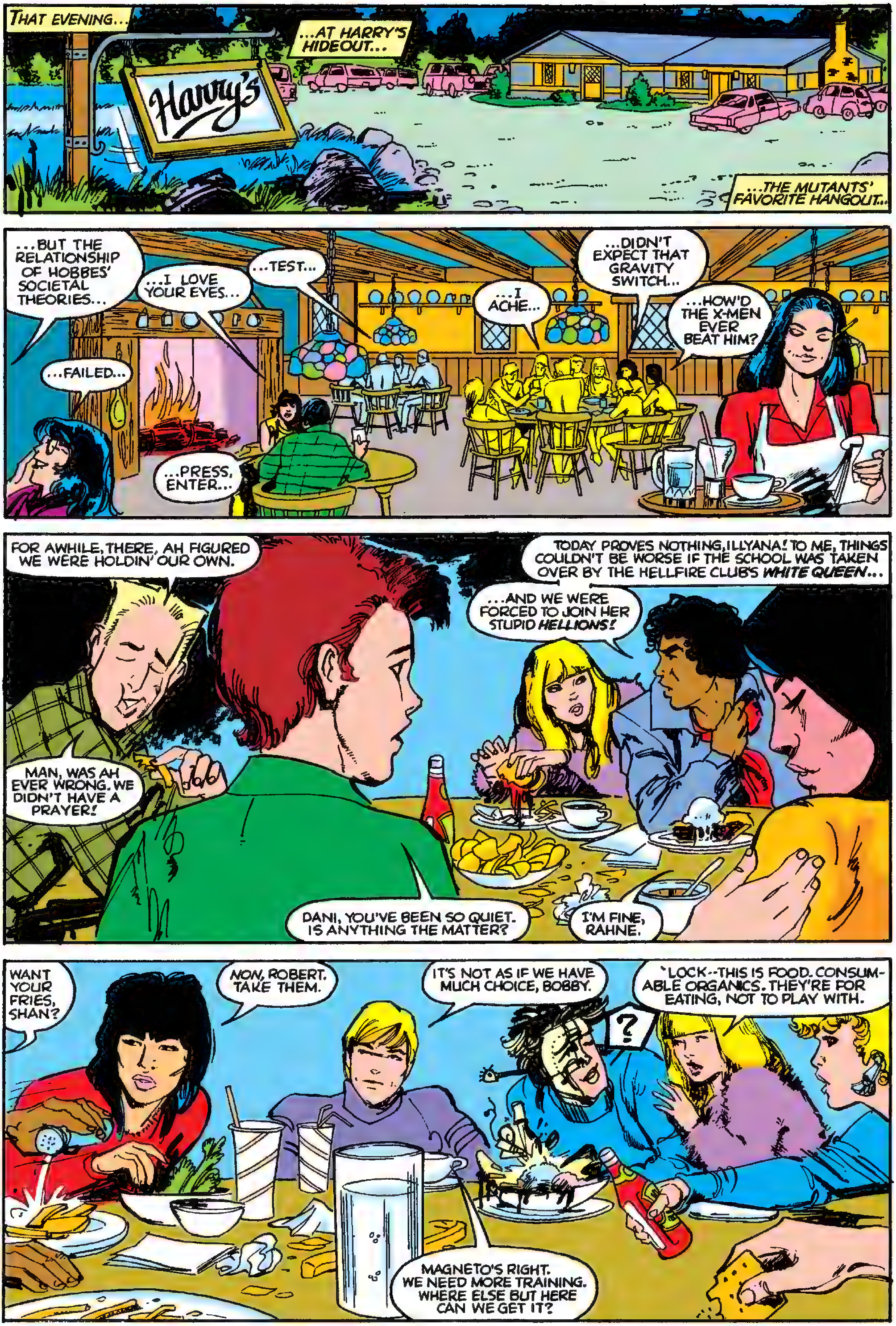

WHO THE HECK DOES THAT BUTTHEAD THINK HE IS?!!
MAGNETO ISN'T BEING ARBITRARY, DOUG-- HE HAS SOUND REASONS.
LEMME GUESS, SHARON-- HE'S AFRAID I'LL GET HURT, RIGHT?
Xavier's
HEY, I'M JUST AS SCARED!
IT'S NOT MY FAULT I GOT STUCK WITH SUCH A WIMP POWER-- IT'S A PEACH, I CAN YELL "DON'T SHOOT" IN ANY LANGUAGE THERE IS, BIG FAT HAIRY DEAL! I KNOW THAT MAKES ME THE TEAM'S WEAK LINK.
ALL THE MORE REASON I SHOULD BE DOWN THERE WITH MY BUDDIES, INSTEAD OF UP HERE IN THE CONTROL BOOTH, WHERE IT'S SAFE. I'LL NEVER BE ABLE TO PULL MY OWN WEIGHT IF NO ONE GIVES ME THE OPPORTUNITY TO LEARN HOW!
DARN IT, SHARON, I EARNED MY PLACE AMONG THE NEW MUTANTS--
--HE HAS NO RIGHT TO TAKE IT AWAY!
MAGNETO'S DONE NO SUCH THING, DOUG. THIS IS ONLY AN EXERCISE, NOTHING MORE.
IF THE NEW TEACH DOESN'T HAVE ANY FAITH IN ME NOW, TOM...
...WHEN WILL HE?!

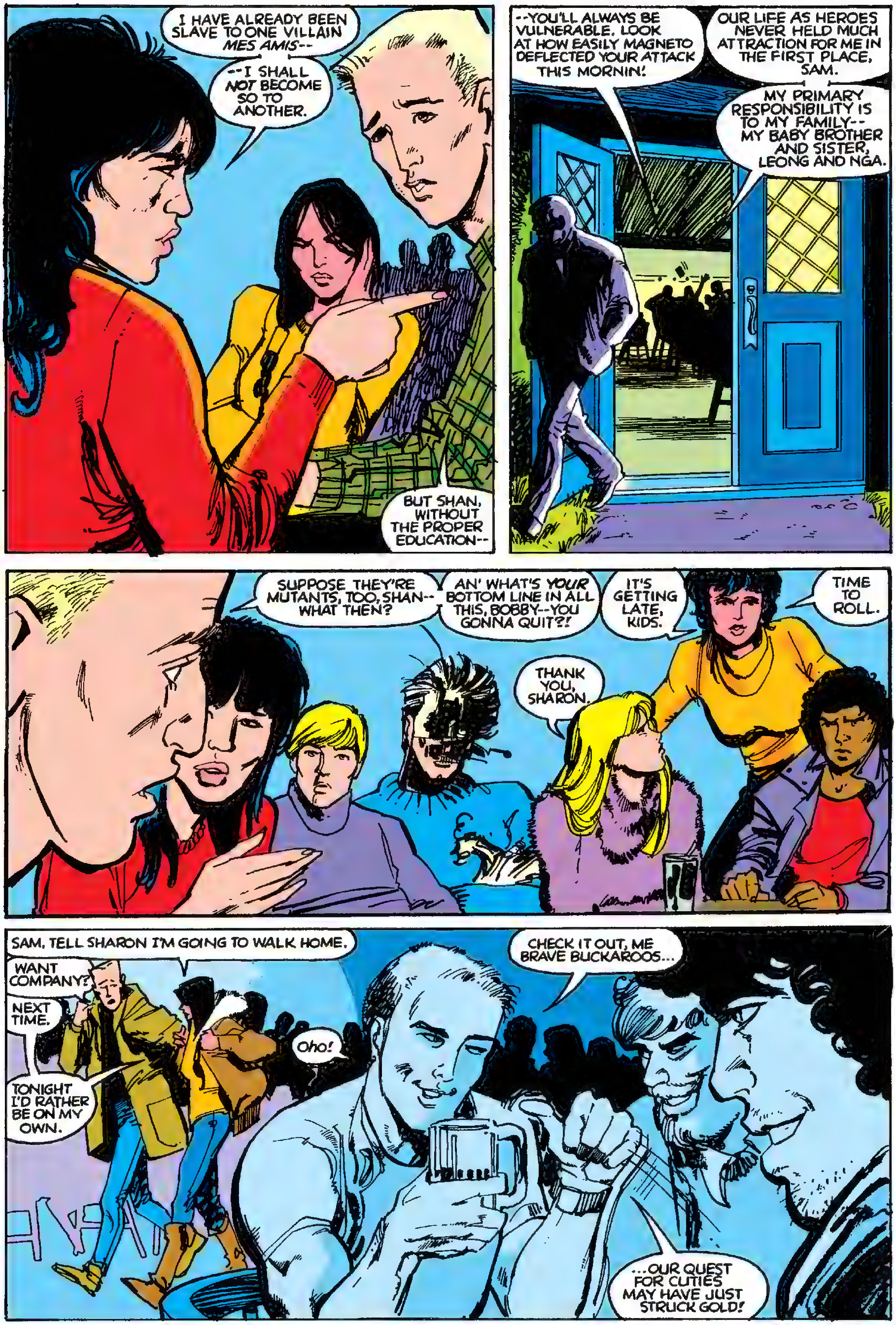

I WAS TOO ABRUPT WITH DOUGLAS. I THINK I HURT HIM DEEPLY.
I CANNOT AFFORD ANOTHER SUCH MISTAKE.
SUNSPOT...
...SINCE YOURS ARE THE STRONGEST OBJECTIONS TO MY PRESENCE...
...PERHAPS YOU WOULD LIKE TO TAKE THE FIRST SHOT AT ME?
WHY SHOULD BOBBY HAVE ALL THE FUN?
CANNONBALL!
HOW 'BOUT TRYIN' *ME* ON FOR SIZE?!
CUTE, SAM. BET YOU'RE WORRIED 'BERTO'LL TRY TO REALLY HURT HIM, AND YOU FIGURE TO HEAD THAT MESS OFF AT THE PROVERBIAL PASS.
LET'S SEE IF ME AND THE COMPUTERS...
"...CAN MAKE THINGS EVEN MORE INTERESTING."
CRUMBS-- A CASTLE! SOMEONE'S ACTIVATED THE ROOM'S ENVIRONMENT PROGRAM!
DUNNO IF IT'S REAL OR AN ILLUSION-- SO CLOSE-- GOTTA SWERVE!
I AM THE *MASTER OF MAGNETISM.*
WITH BUT A THOUGHT, SAMUEL GUTHRIE...
...I CAN ENSHROUD YOU IN A COCOON OF METAL.
RATS!
IT FITS SO SNUG AH CAN'T BLAST-- AN' THAT MEANS...
...AH CAN'T STAY AIRBORNE!
CLONG!

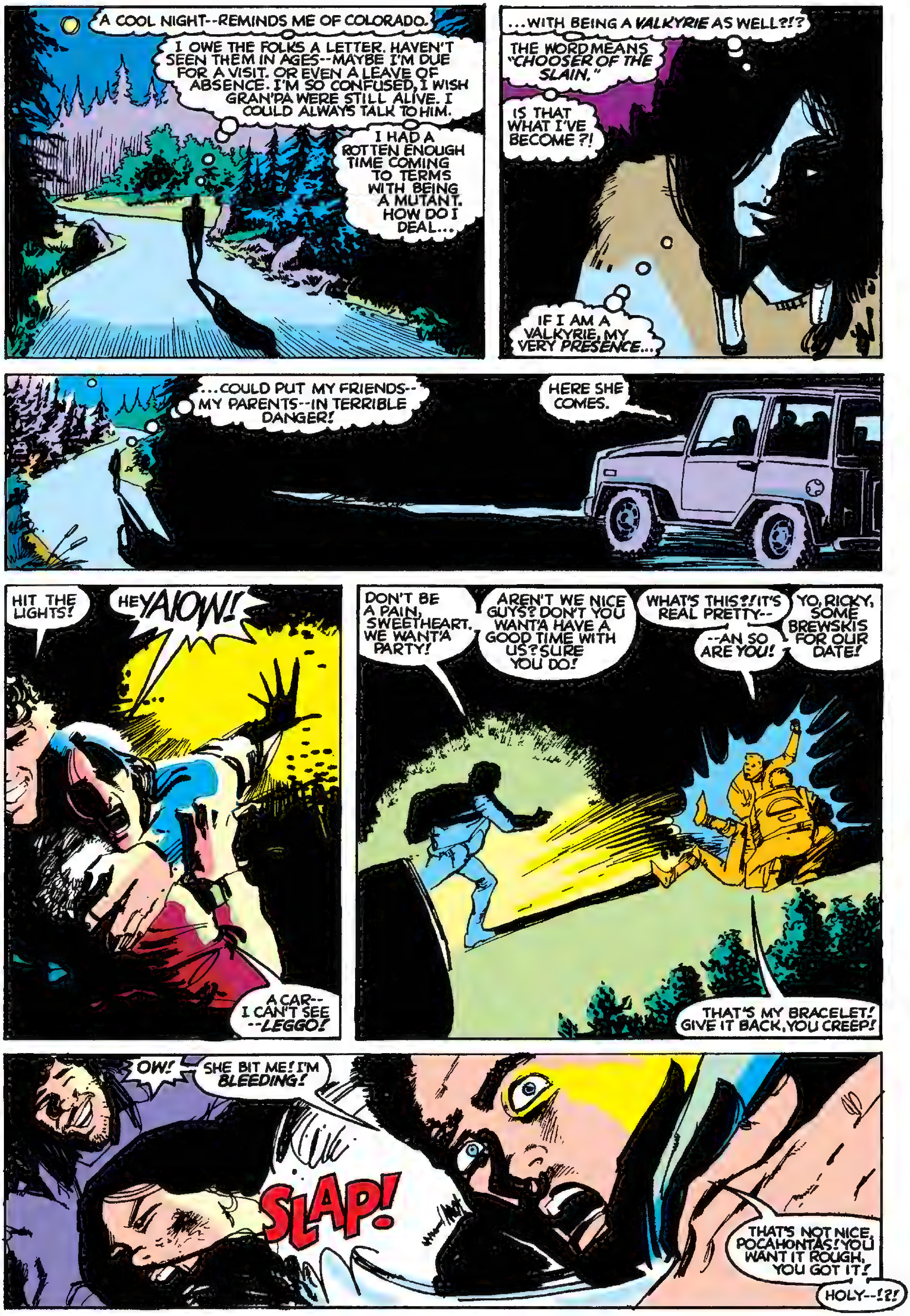

SELF WILL CATCH TEACHER!
A BEING COMPOSED OF LIVING, ORGANIC CIRCUITRY?
EAIEAIEYIAEIAOW!
SOMEHOW, WARLOCK, I THINK NOT.
ZAP!
BE CAREFUL IN THE--*YAWN*--FIELD! THE FLOWERS MAKE YOU--*YAWWN*--*SLEEPY!*
I SHALL MELT THIS CASEMENT OFF YOU, SAM!
THANKS, 'MARA.
BUT PLEASE, GIRL, BE REAL CAREFUL HOW DEEP YOUR FLAMES CUT!
OZ POPPIES, RAHNE--WE'VE GOT TO GET OUT OF HERE, FAST, BEFORE THEIR SCENT KAYOS US!
WHAT HAPPENED TO WARLOCK?!
I BELIEVE MAGNETO GAVE HIM A MILD SHOCK.
YOU CALL THAT MILD, SHAN?
IT CAUSED A PRETTY IMPRESSIVE REACTION--KEEP YOUR EYES PEELED, HE FELL JUST AHEAD.

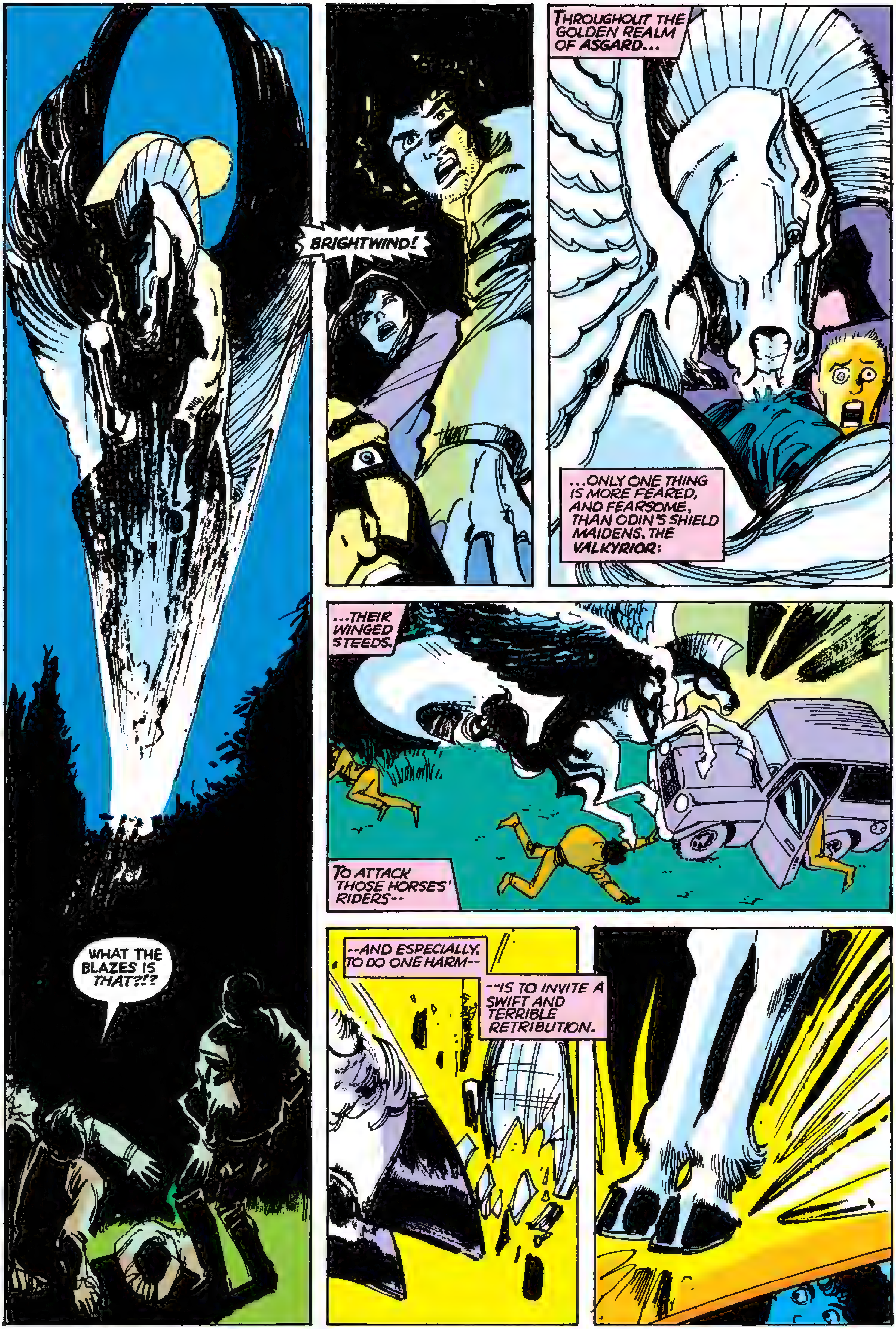

OW!
WHOOPS!
WARLOCK?!?
whimpersnufflemoansniffsobsobboohoo
Oh, BROTHER-- HE'S LIKE A GIANT SINGLE STRAND OF SPAGHETTI!
YEAH-- TWENTY MILES LONG!!
AT LEAST HIS LIFEGLOW'S STILL BRIGHT. I DOUBT HE'S REALLY HURT-- THE BIG BABY'S JUST FEELING SORRY FOR HIMSELF.
WE SEARCHED ALL OVER, DANI. NO SIGN OF MAGNETO.
SORRY AH JUMPED THE GUN.
THAT DOESN'T MEAN A HECKUVA LOT, SAM. IN A REAL FIGHT, THAT KIND OF STUPID, SOLO STUNT COULD HAVE GOTTEN YOU KILLED!
WE'RE NO MATCH FOR MAGNETO AS INDIVIDUALS, WE HAVE TO WORK AS A TEAM!
I'M GOING TO USE MY PSI-LINK TO CONTACT WOLFSBANE--
RAHNE-- ANY SIGN OF MAGNETO'S SCENT?
NAY, DANI. HE'S HIDDEN HIMSELF TOO WELL.
KEEP LOOKING--
WHAT THE--?!!
A TRAP-- EVERYONE SCATTER!
I'LL HOLD THE WALLS-- WHUNFF-- APART!
THERE HE IS!
NOW THAT OUR FOE HAS SHOWN HIMSELF--
-- I CAN POSSESS HIM!

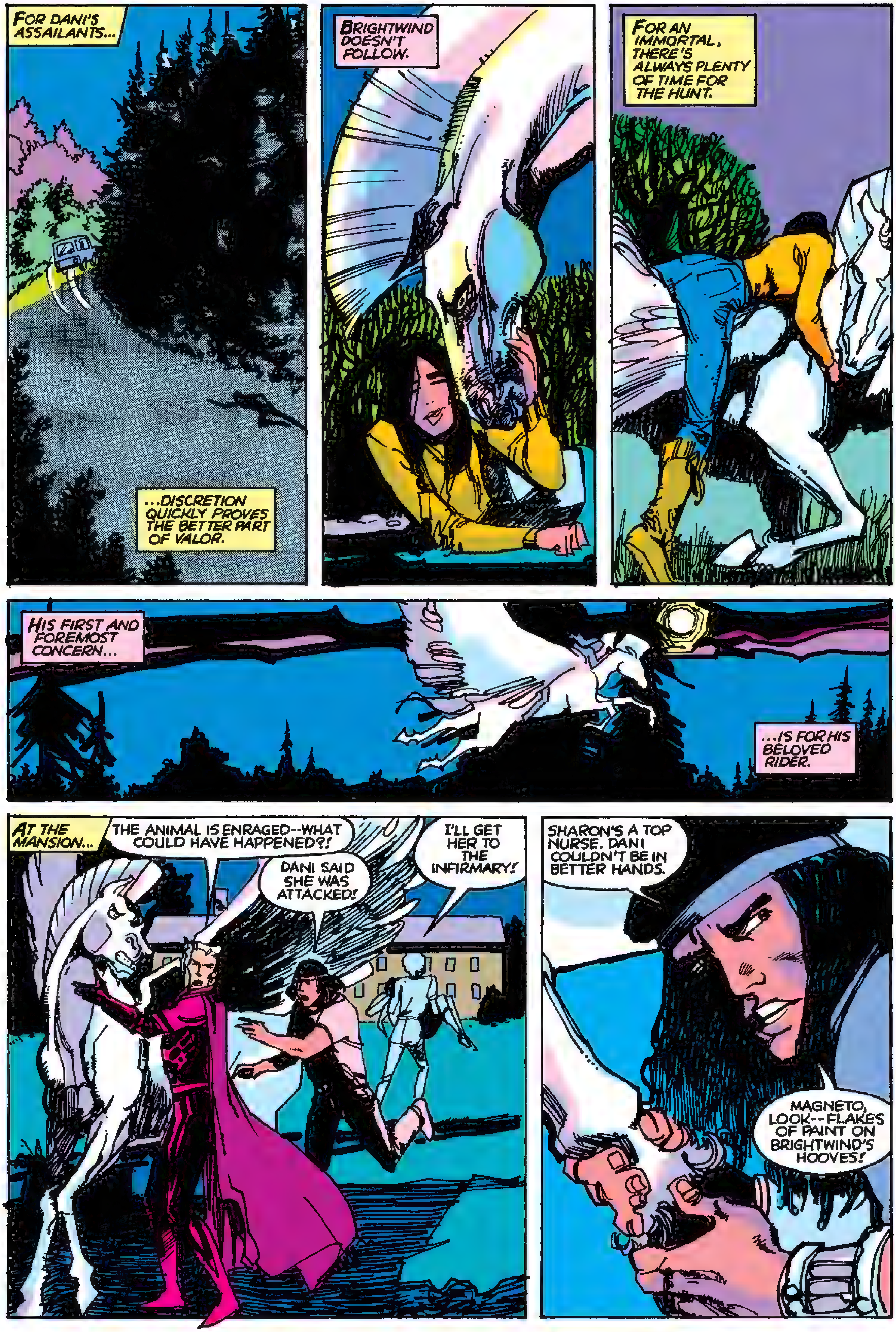

YOUR POWER IS FORMIDABLE, KARMA...
...BUT NOT FOOLPROOF...
...AGAINST ONE WITH THE PROPER PSYCHIC TRAINING AND SUFFICIENT WILL TO RESIST.
HE REFLECTED MY ATTACK BACK ON ME!
I'VE POSSESSED *ROBERT!*
THE BOX HAS CLOSED! WE'RE SEALED IN!!
NO PROBLEM. I'LL TELEPORT US OUT.
KARMA RELEASED BOBBY. HE'S GROGGY-- BUT OKAY.
AND, AFTER MAGIK WHISKS HER FELLOW MUTANTS FROM THEIR PRISON TO LIMBO-- THE OTHER-DIMENSIONAL SORCEROUS DOMAIN SHE RULES--
--AND BACK TO THE DANGER ROOM...
GOT YOU!
SO YOU HAVE, YOUNG WOLFSBANE--
--BUT NOT FOR LONG.
BEHOLD WHAT OCCURS WHEN I GENERATE SUFFICIENT POWER TO EFFECTIVELY REVERSE GRAVITY!
YA!OW!
THE FIRST ROUND, I THINK, GOES TO ME.
NOW, ONCE CYPHER HAS RESET HIS COMPUTERS...
...WE SHALL BEGIN AGAIN-- IN EARNEST.

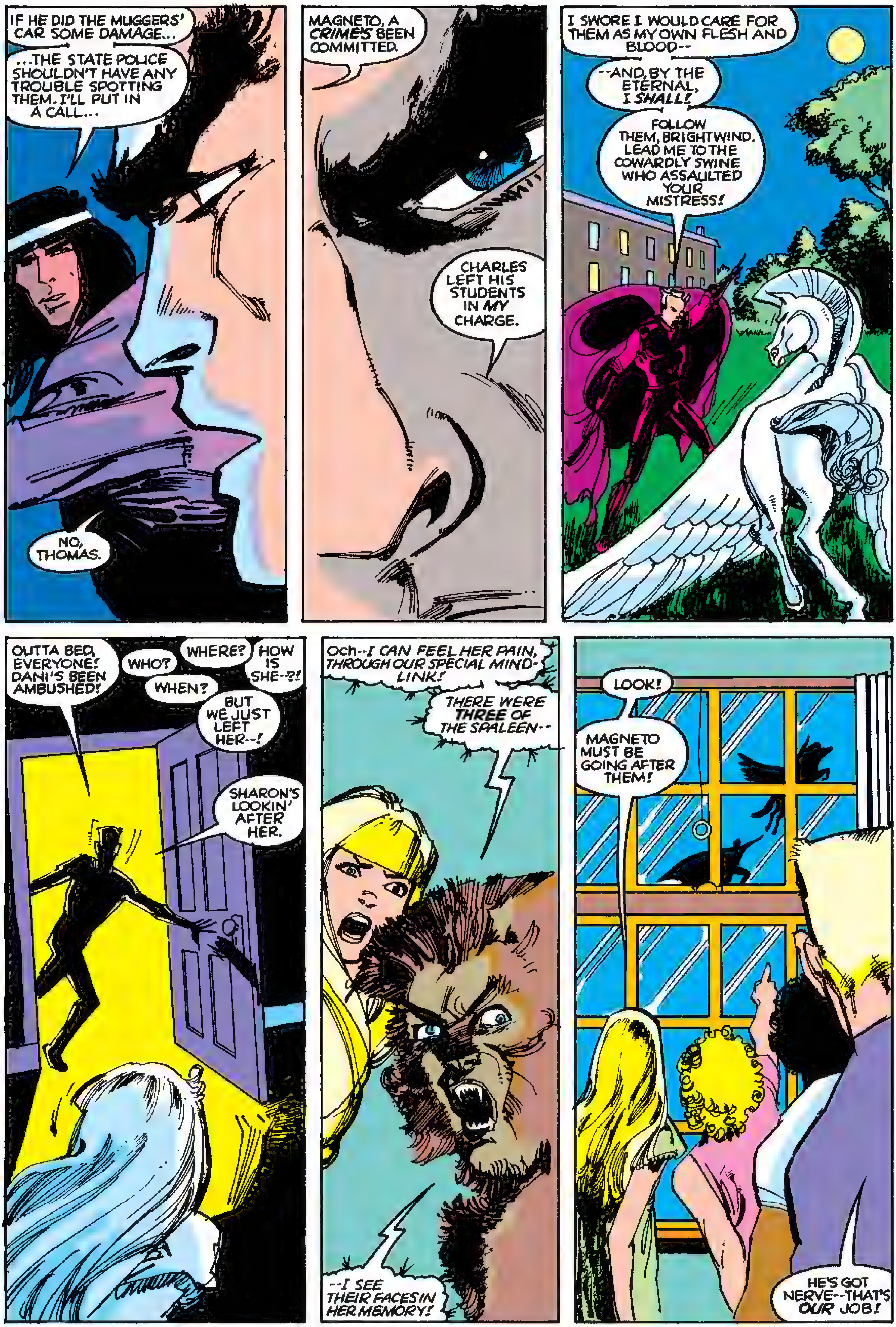

THAT EVENING...
...AT HARRY'S HIDEOUT...
Harry's
...THE MUTANTS' FAVORITE HANGOUT...
...BUT THE RELATIONSHIP OF HOBBES' SOCIETAL THEORIES...
...FAILED...
...I LOVE YOUR EYES...
...TEST...
...PRESS, ENTER...
...I ACHE...
...DIDN'T EXPECT THAT GRAVITY SWITCH...
...HOW'D THE X-MEN EVER BEAT HIM?
FOR AWHILE, THERE, AH FIGURED WE WERE HOLDIN' OUR OWN.
MAN, WAS AH EVER WRONG. WE DIDN'T HAVE A PRAYER!
TODAY PROVES NOTHING, ILLYANA! TO ME, THINGS COULDN'T BE WORSE IF THE SCHOOL WAS TAKEN OVER BY THE HELLFIRE CLUB'S ***WHITE QUEEN***...
...AND WE WERE FORCED TO JOIN HER STUPID ***HELLIONS!***
DANI, YOU'VE BEEN SO QUIET. IS ANYTHING THE MATTER?
I'M FINE, RAHNE.
WANT YOUR FRIES, SHAN?
NON, ROBERT. TAKE THEM.
IT'S NOT AS IF WE HAVE MUCH CHOICE, BOBBY.
?
'LOCK--THIS IS FOOD. CONSUMABLE ORGANICS. THEY'RE FOR EATING, NOT TO PLAY WITH.
MAGNETO'S RIGHT. WE NEED MORE TRAINING. WHERE ELSE BUT HERE CAN WE GET IT?

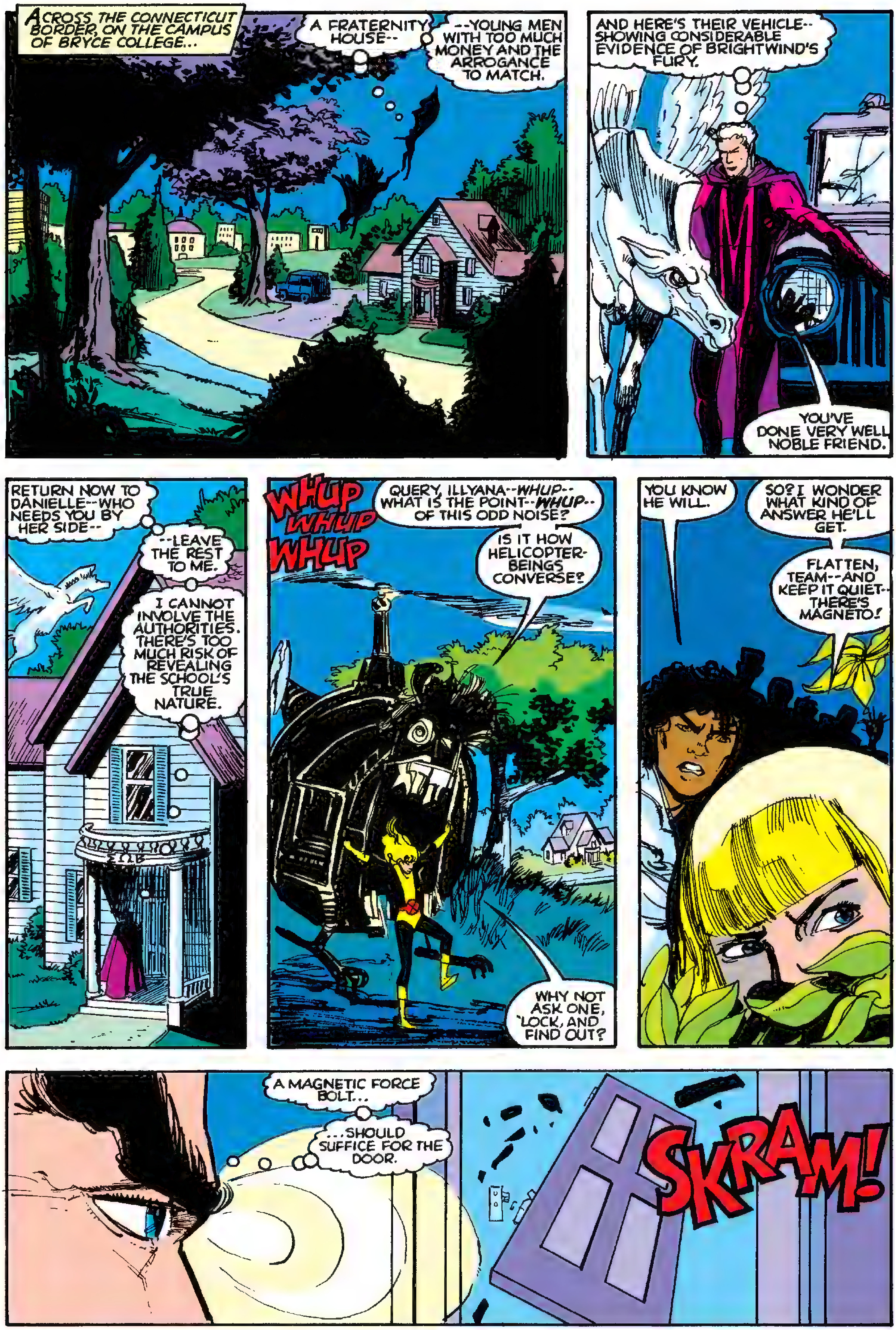

I HAVE ALREADY BEEN SLAVE TO ONE VILLAIN *MES AMIS*--
--I SHALL *NOT* BECOME SO TO ANOTHER.
BUT SHAN, WITHOUT THE PROPER EDUCATION--
--YOU'LL ALWAYS BE VULNERABLE. LOOK AT HOW EASILY MAGNETO DEFLECTED YOUR ATTACK THIS MORNIN'.
OUR LIFE AS HEROES NEVER HELD MUCH ATTRACTION FOR ME IN THE FIRST PLACE, SAM.
MY PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITY IS TO MY FAMILY--MY BABY BROTHER AND SISTER, LEONG AND NGA.
SUPPOSE THEY'RE MUTANTS, TOO, SHAN--WHAT THEN?
AN' WHAT'S *YOUR* BOTTOM LINE IN ALL THIS, BOBBY--YOU GONNA QUIT?!
IT'S GETTING LATE, KIDS.
TIME TO ROLL.
THANK YOU, SHARON.
SAM, TELL SHARON I'M GOING TO WALK HOME.
WANT COMPANY?
NEXT TIME.
TONIGHT I'D RATHER BE ON MY OWN.
Oho!
CHECK IT OUT, ME BRAVE BUCKAROOS...
...OUR QUEST FOR CUTIES MAY HAVE JUST STRUCK GOLD!

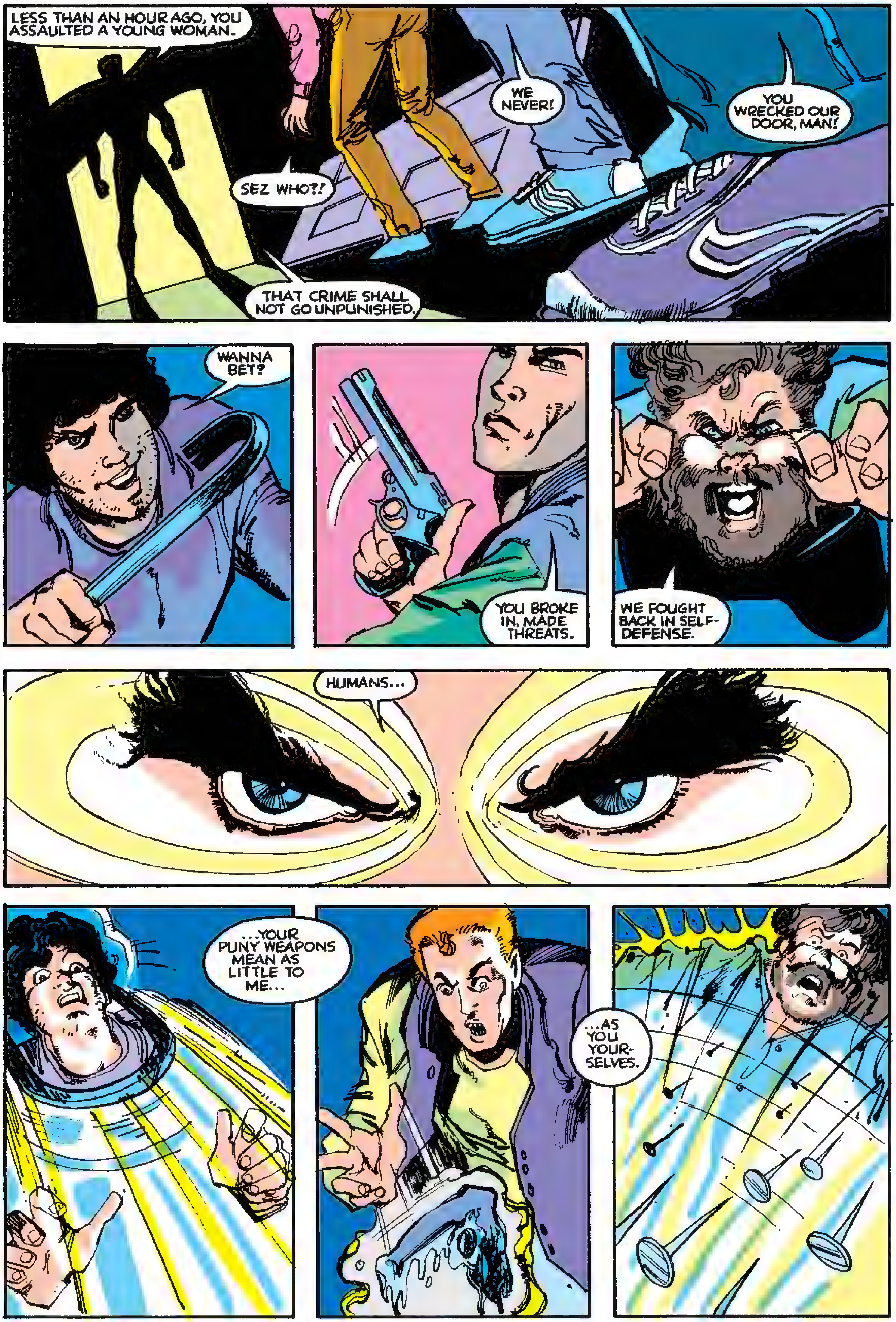

A COOL NIGHT--REMINDS ME OF COLORADO.
I OWE THE FOLKS A LETTER. HAVEN'T SEEN THEM IN AGES--MAYBE I'M DUE FOR A VISIT. OR EVEN A LEAVE OF ABSENCE. I'M SO CONFUSED, I WISH GRAN'PA WERE STILL ALIVE. I COULD ALWAYS TALK TO HIM.
I HAD A ROTTEN ENOUGH TIME COMING TO TERMS WITH BEING A MUTANT. HOW DO I DEAL...
...WITH BEING A *VALKYRIE* AS WELL?!?
THE WORD MEANS "*CHOOSER OF THE SLAIN.*"
IS THAT WHAT I'VE BECOME?!
IF I AM A VALKYRIE, MY VERY *PRESENCE*...
...COULD PUT MY FRIENDS--MY PARENTS--IN TERRIBLE DANGER!
HERE SHE COMES.
HIT THE LIGHTS!
HEYAIOW!
A CAR-- I CAN'T SEE --*LEGGO!*
DON'T BE A PAIN, SWEETHEART. WE WANT'A PARTY!
AREN'T WE NICE GUYS? DON'T YOU WANT'A HAVE A GOOD TIME WITH US? SURE YOU DO!
WHAT'S THIS?! IT'S REAL PRETTY--
--AN SO ARE *YOU!*
YO, RICKY, SOME BREWSKIS FOR OUR DATE!
THAT'S MY BRACELET! GIVE IT BACK, YOU CREEP!
OW!
SHE BIT ME! I'M *BLEEDING!*
SLAP!
THAT'S NOT NICE, POCAHONTAS! YOU WANT IT ROUGH, YOU GOT IT!
HOLY--!?!

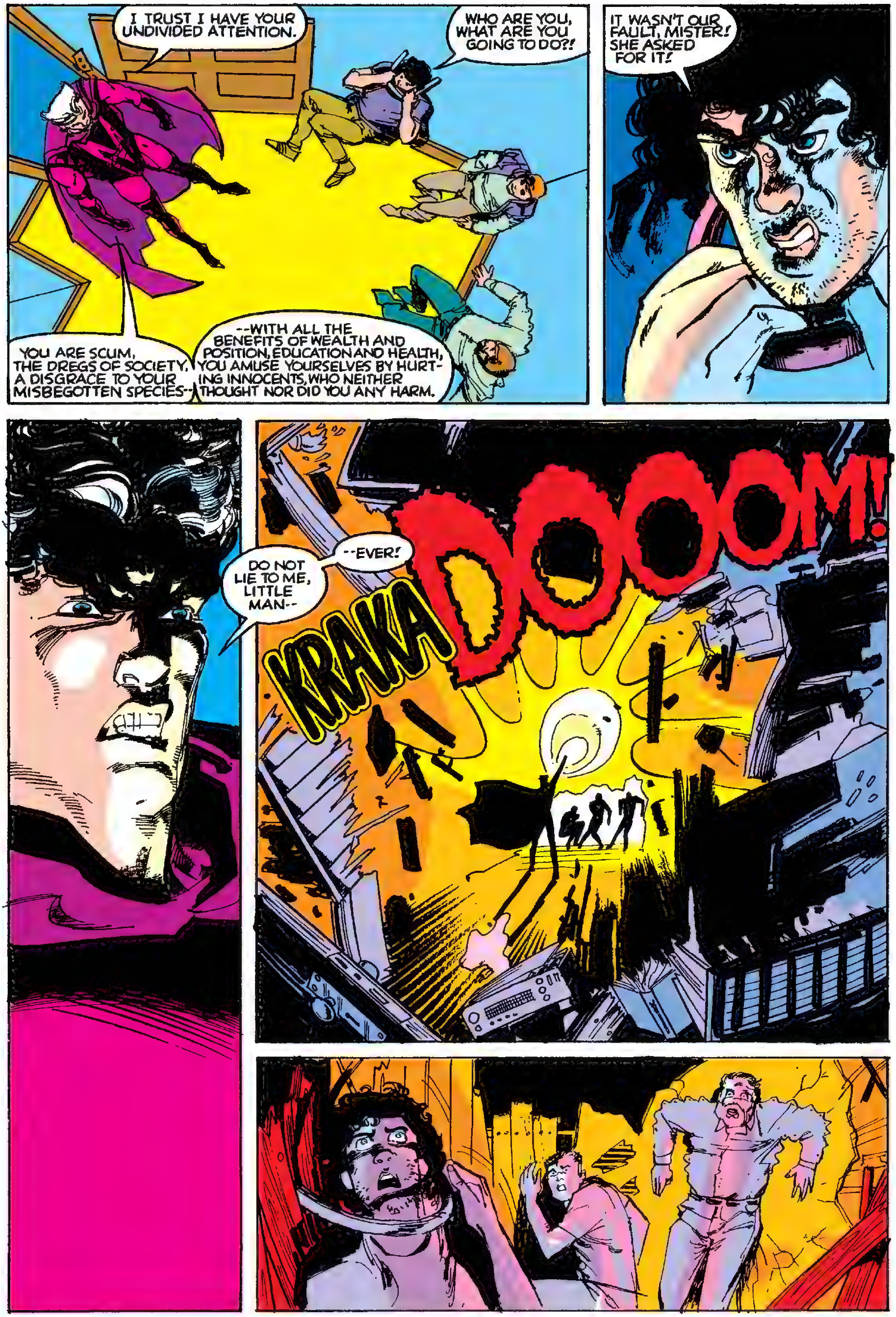

WHAT THE BLAZES IS THAT?!?
BRIGHTWIND!
THROUGHOUT THE GOLDEN REALM OF ASGARD...
...ONLY ONE THING IS MORE FEARED, AND FEARSOME, THAN ODIN'S SHIELD MAIDENS, THE VALKYRIOR:
...THEIR WINGED STEEDS.
TO ATTACK THOSE HORSES' RIDERS--
--AND ESPECIALLY, TO DO ONE HARM--
--IS TO INVITE A SWIFT AND TERRIBLE RETRIBUTION.

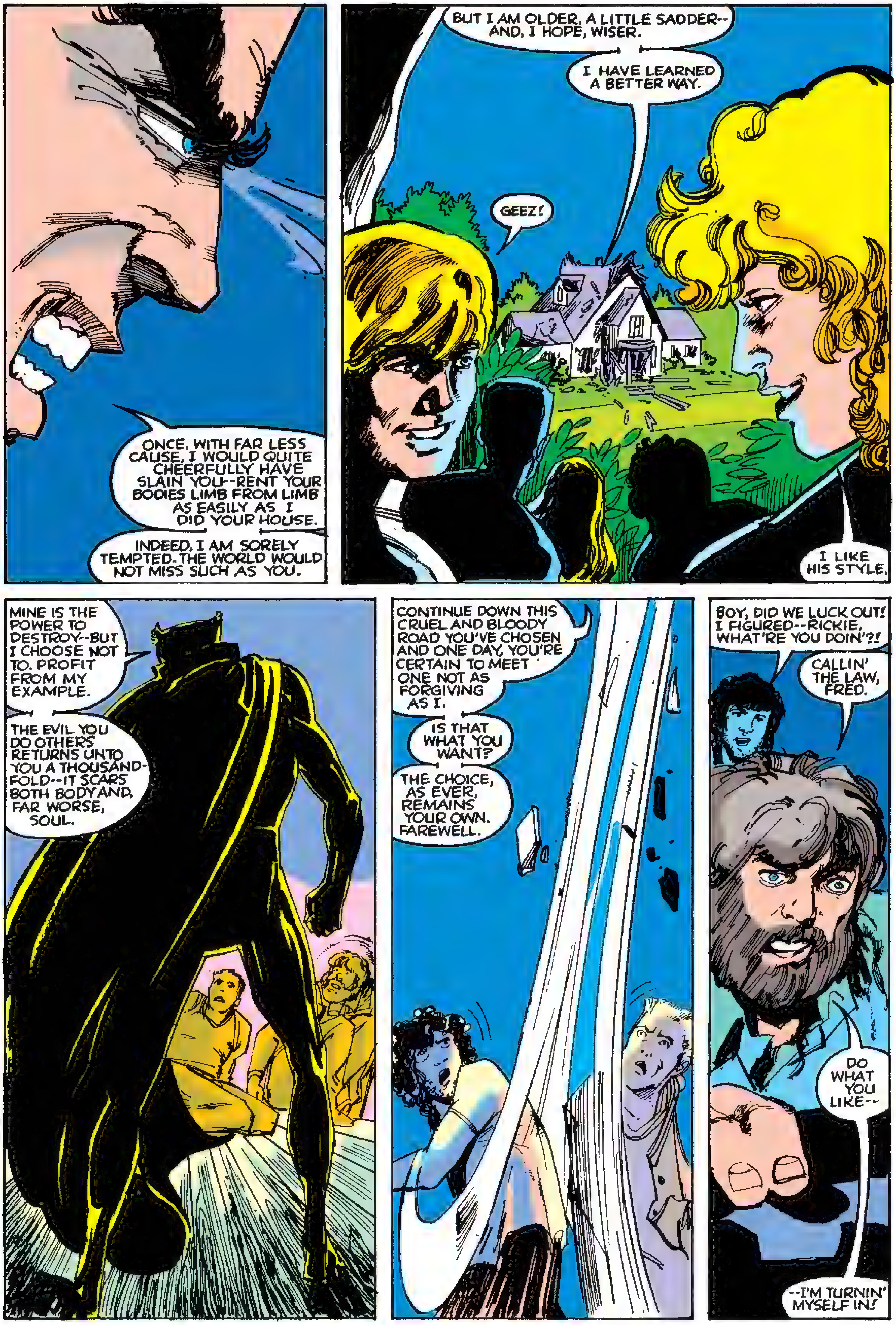

FOR DANI'S ASSAILANTS...
...DISCRETION QUICKLY PROVES THE BETTER PART OF VALOR.
BRIGHTWIND DOESN'T FOLLOW.
FOR AN IMMORTAL, THERE'S ALWAYS PLENTY OF TIME FOR THE HUNT.
HIS FIRST AND FOREMOST CONCERN...
...IS FOR HIS BELOVED RIDER.
AT THE MANSION...
THE ANIMAL IS ENRAGED--WHAT COULD HAVE HAPPENED?!
DANI SAID SHE WAS ATTACKED!
I'LL GET HER TO THE INFIRMARY!
SHARON'S A TOP NURSE. DANI COULDN'T BE IN BETTER HANDS.
MAGNETO, LOOK--FLAKES OF PAINT ON BRIGHTWIND'S HOOVES!

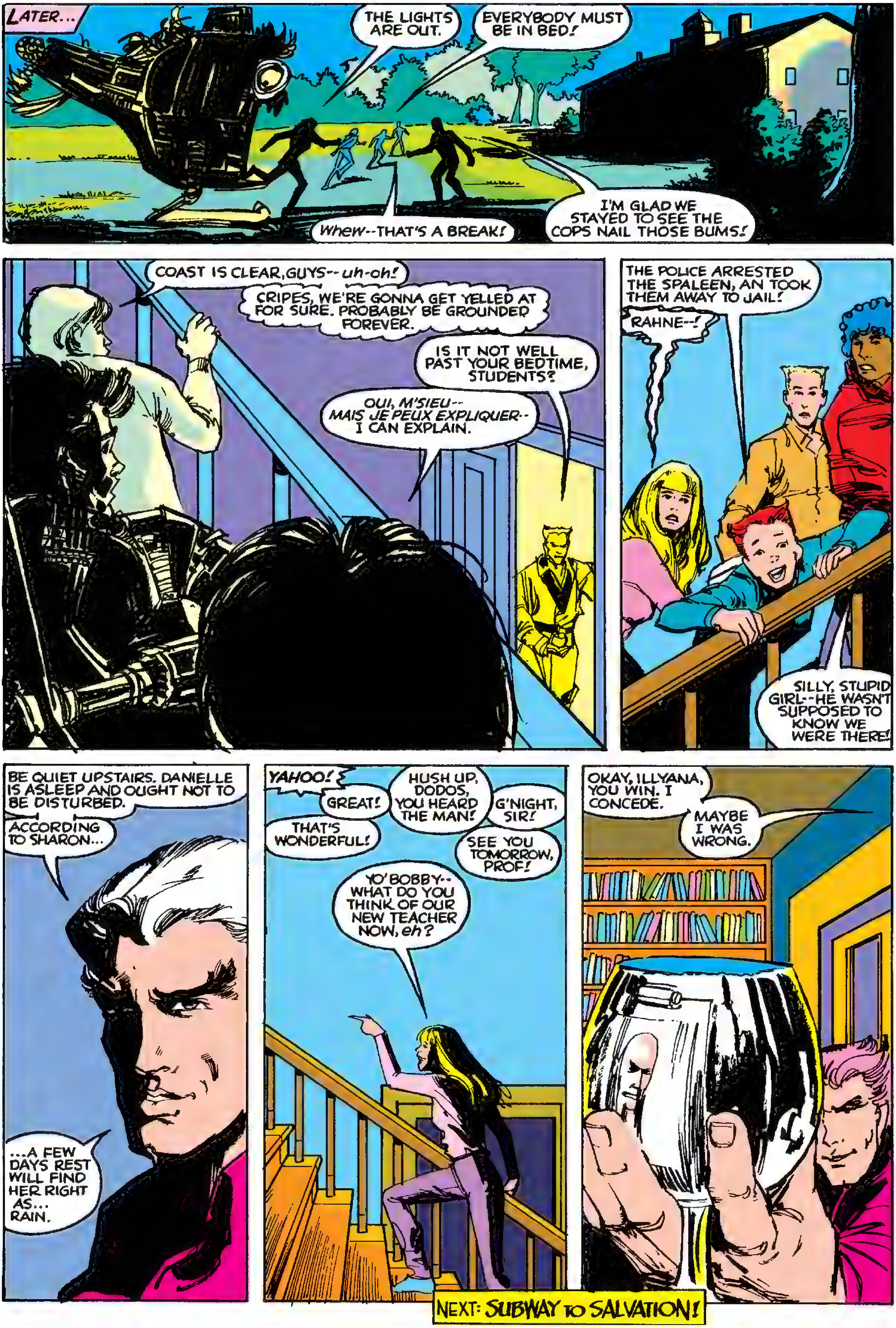

IF HE DID THE MUGGERS' CAR SOME DAMAGE...
...THE STATE POLICE SHOULDN'T HAVE ANY TROUBLE SPOTTING THEM. I'LL PUT IN A CALL...
NO, THOMAS.
MAGNETO, A CRIME'S BEEN COMMITTED.
CHARLES LEFT HIS STUDENTS IN MY CHARGE.
I SWORE I WOULD CARE FOR THEM AS MY OWN FLESH AND BLOOD--
--AND, BY THE ETERNAL, I SHALL!
FOLLOW THEM, BRIGHTWIND. LEAD ME TO THE COWARDLY SWINE WHO ASSAULTED YOUR MISTRESS!
OUTTA BED, EVERYONE! DANI'S BEEN AMBUSHED!
WHO?
WHERE?
HOW IS SHE--?!
WHEN?
BUT WE JUST LEFT HER--!
SHARON'S LOOKIN' AFTER HER.
Och--I CAN FEEL HER PAIN, THROUGH OUR SPECIAL MIND-LINK!
THERE WERE THREE OF THE SPALEEN--
--I SEE THEIR FACES IN HER MEMORY!
LOOK!
MAGNETO MUST BE GOING AFTER THEM!
HE'S GOT NERVE--THAT'S OUR JOB!


ACROSS THE CONNECTICUT BORDER, ON THE CAMPUS OF BRYCE COLLEGE...
A FRATERNITY HOUSE--
--YOUNG MEN WITH TOO MUCH MONEY AND THE ARROGANCE TO MATCH.
AND HERE'S THEIR VEHICLE--SHOWING CONSIDERABLE EVIDENCE OF BRIGHTWIND'S FURY.
YOU'VE DONE VERY WELL NOBLE FRIEND.
RETURN NOW TO DANIELLE--WHO NEEDS YOU BY HER SIDE--
--LEAVE THE REST TO ME.
I CANNOT INVOLVE THE AUTHORITIES. THERE'S TOO MUCH RISK OF REVEALING THE SCHOOL'S TRUE NATURE.
WHUP WHUP WHUP
QUERY, ILLYANA--WHUP--WHAT IS THE POINT--WHUP--OF THIS ODD NOISE?
IS IT HOW HELICOPTER-BEINGS CONVERSE?
WHY NOT ASK ONE, 'LOCK, AND FIND OUT?
YOU KNOW HE WILL.
SO? I WONDER WHAT KIND OF ANSWER HE'LL GET.
FLATTEN, TEAM--AND KEEP IT QUIET--THERE'S MAGNETO!
A MAGNETIC FORCE BOLT...
...SHOULD SUFFICE FOR THE DOOR.
SKRAM!


LESS THAN AN HOUR AGO, YOU ASSAULTED A YOUNG WOMAN.
SEZ WHO?!
WE NEVER!
YOU WRECKED OUR DOOR, MAN!
THAT CRIME SHALL NOT GO UNPUNISHED.
WANNA BET?
YOU BROKE IN, MADE THREATS.
WE FOUGHT BACK IN SELF-DEFENSE.
HUMANS...
...YOUR PUNY WEAPONS MEAN AS LITTLE TO ME...
...AS YOU YOURSELVES.


I TRUST I HAVE YOUR UNDIVIDED ATTENTION.
WHO ARE YOU, WHAT ARE YOU GOING TO DO?!
YOU ARE SCUM, THE DREGS OF SOCIETY, A DISGRACE TO YOUR MISBEGOTTEN SPECIES--
--WITH ALL THE BENEFITS OF WEALTH AND POSITION, EDUCATION AND HEALTH, YOU AMUSE YOURSELVES BY HURTING INNOCENTS, WHO NEITHER THOUGHT NOR DID YOU ANY HARM.
IT WASN'T OUR FAULT, MISTER! SHE ASKED FOR IT!
DO NOT LIE TO ME, LITTLE MAN--
--EVER!
KRAKADOOOOM!


ONCE, WITH FAR LESS CAUSE, I WOULD QUITE CHEERFULLY HAVE SLAIN YOU--RENT YOUR BODIES LIMB FROM LIMB AS EASILY AS I DID YOUR HOUSE.
INDEED, I AM SORELY TEMPTED. THE WORLD WOULD NOT MISS SUCH AS YOU.
BUT I AM OLDER, A LITTLE SADDER-- AND, I HOPE, WISER.
I HAVE LEARNED A BETTER WAY.
GEEZ!
I LIKE HIS STYLE.
MINE IS THE POWER TO DESTROY--BUT I CHOOSE NOT TO. PROFIT FROM MY EXAMPLE.
THE EVIL YOU DO OTHERS RETURNS UNTO YOU A THOUSAND-FOLD--IT SCARS BOTH BODY AND, FAR WORSE, SOUL.
CONTINUE DOWN THIS CRUEL AND BLOODY ROAD YOU'VE CHOSEN AND ONE DAY, YOU'RE CERTAIN TO MEET ONE NOT AS FORGIVING AS I.
IS THAT WHAT YOU WANT?
THE CHOICE, AS EVER, REMAINS YOUR OWN. FAREWELL.
BOY, DID WE LUCK OUT! I FIGURED--RICKIE, WHAT'RE YOU DOIN'?!
CALLIN' THE LAW, FRED.
DO WHAT YOU LIKE--
--I'M TURNIN' MYSELF IN!


LATER...
THE LIGHTS ARE OUT.
EVERYBODY MUST BE IN BED!
Whew--THAT'S A BREAK!
I'M GLAD WE STAYED TO SEE THE COPS NAIL THOSE BUMS!
COAST IS CLEAR, GUYS-- uh-oh!
CRIPES, WE'RE GONNA GET YELLED AT FOR SURE. PROBABLY BE GROUNDED FOREVER.
IS IT NOT WELL PAST YOUR BEDTIME, STUDENTS?
OUI, M'SIEU-- MAIS JE PEUX EXPLIQUER-- I CAN EXPLAIN.
THE POLICE ARRESTED THE SPALEEN, AN TOOK THEM AWAY TO JAIL!
RAHNE--!
SILLY, STUPID GIRL--HE WASN'T SUPPOSED TO KNOW WE WERE THERE!
BE QUIET UPSTAIRS. DANIELLE IS ASLEEP AND OUGHT NOT TO BE DISTURBED.
ACCORDING TO SHARON...
...A FEW DAYS REST WILL FIND HER RIGHT AS... RAIN.
YAHOO!
GREAT!
THAT'S WONDERFUL!
HUSH UP, DODOS, YOU HEARD THE MAN!
G'NIGHT, SIR!
SEE YOU TOMORROW, PROF!
YO' BOBBY-- WHAT DO YOU THINK OF OUR NEW TEACHER NOW, eh?
OKAY, ILLYANA, YOU WIN. I CONCEDE.
MAYBE I WAS WRONG.
NEXT: SUBWAY TO SALVATION!

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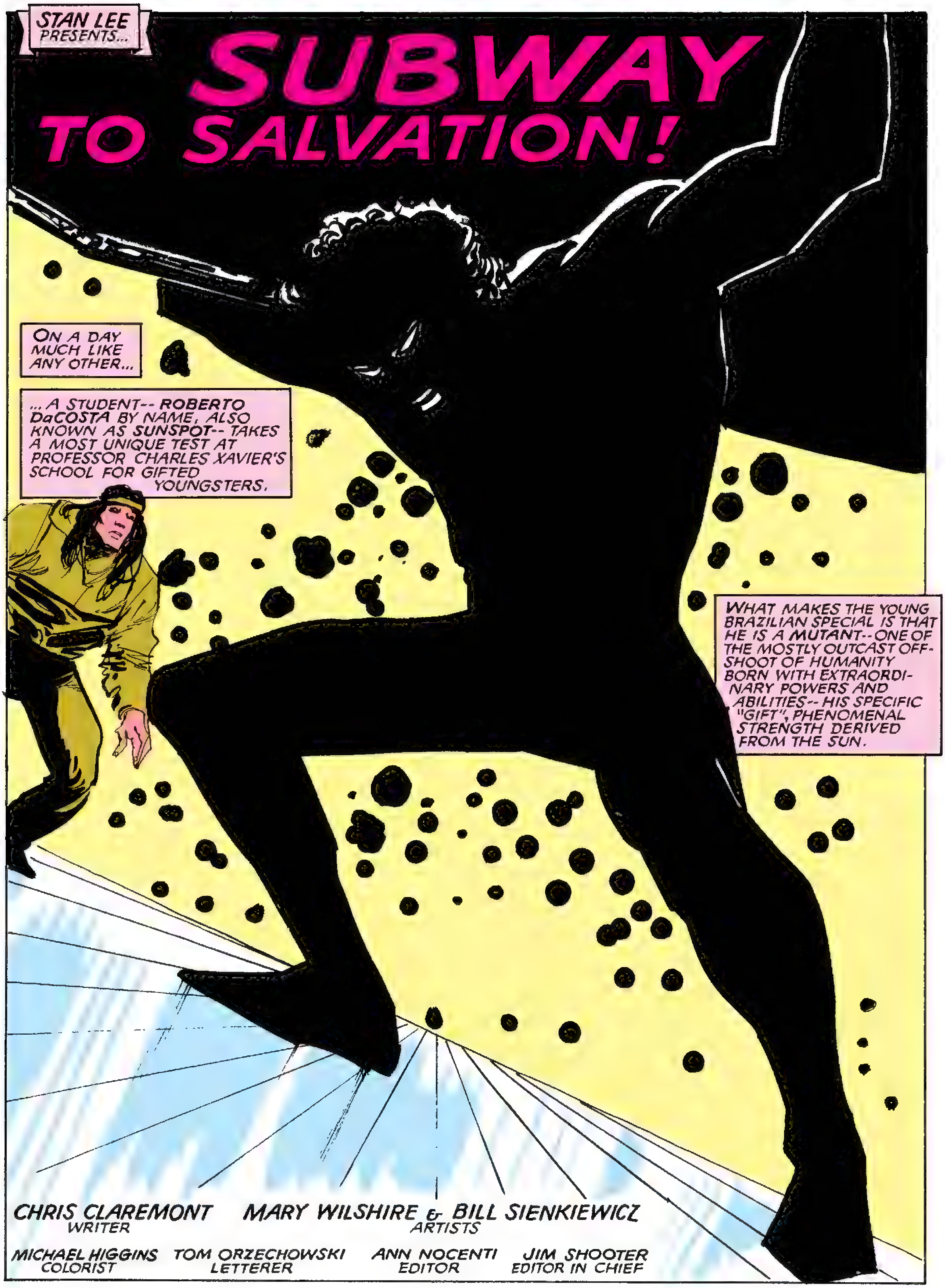
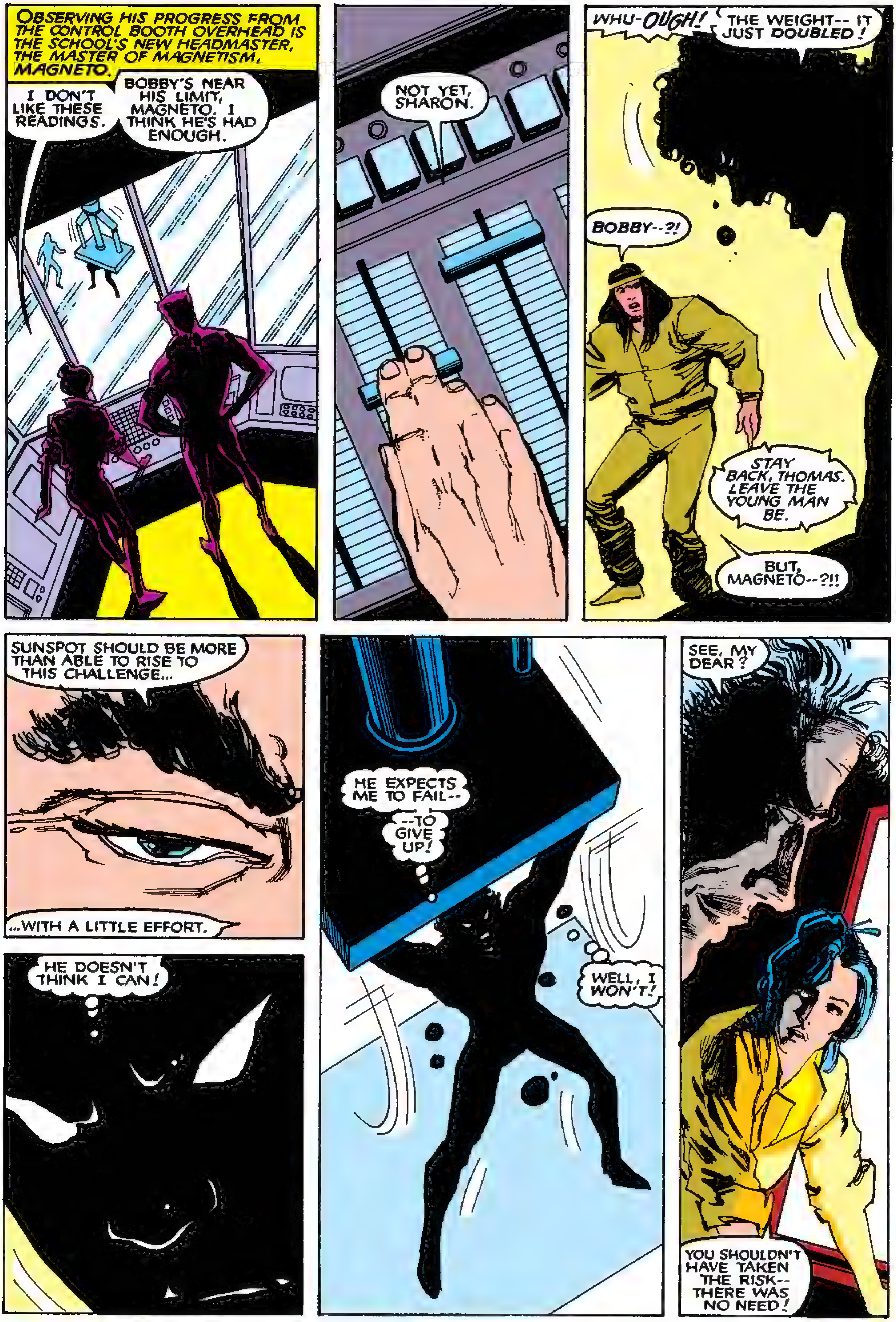
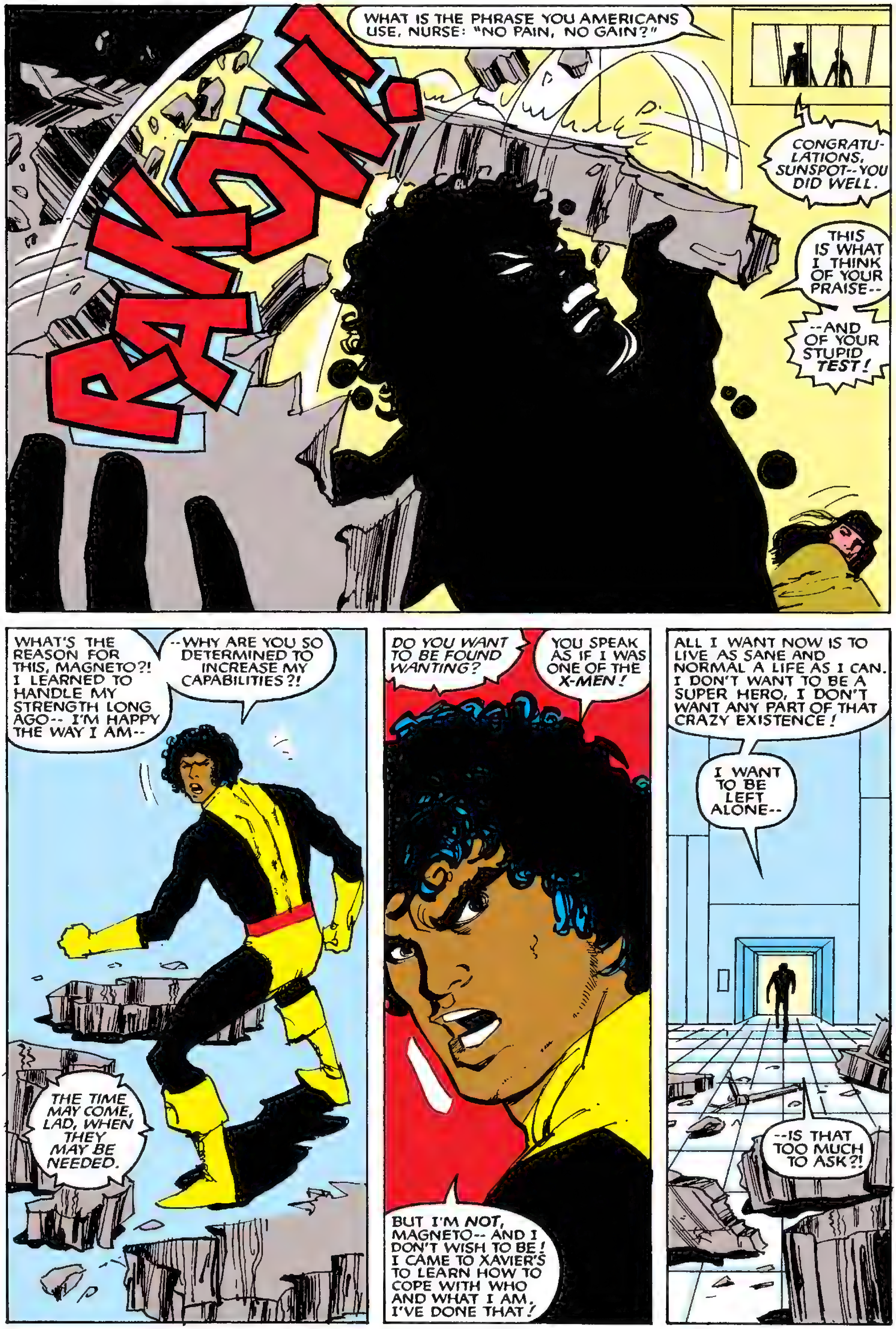
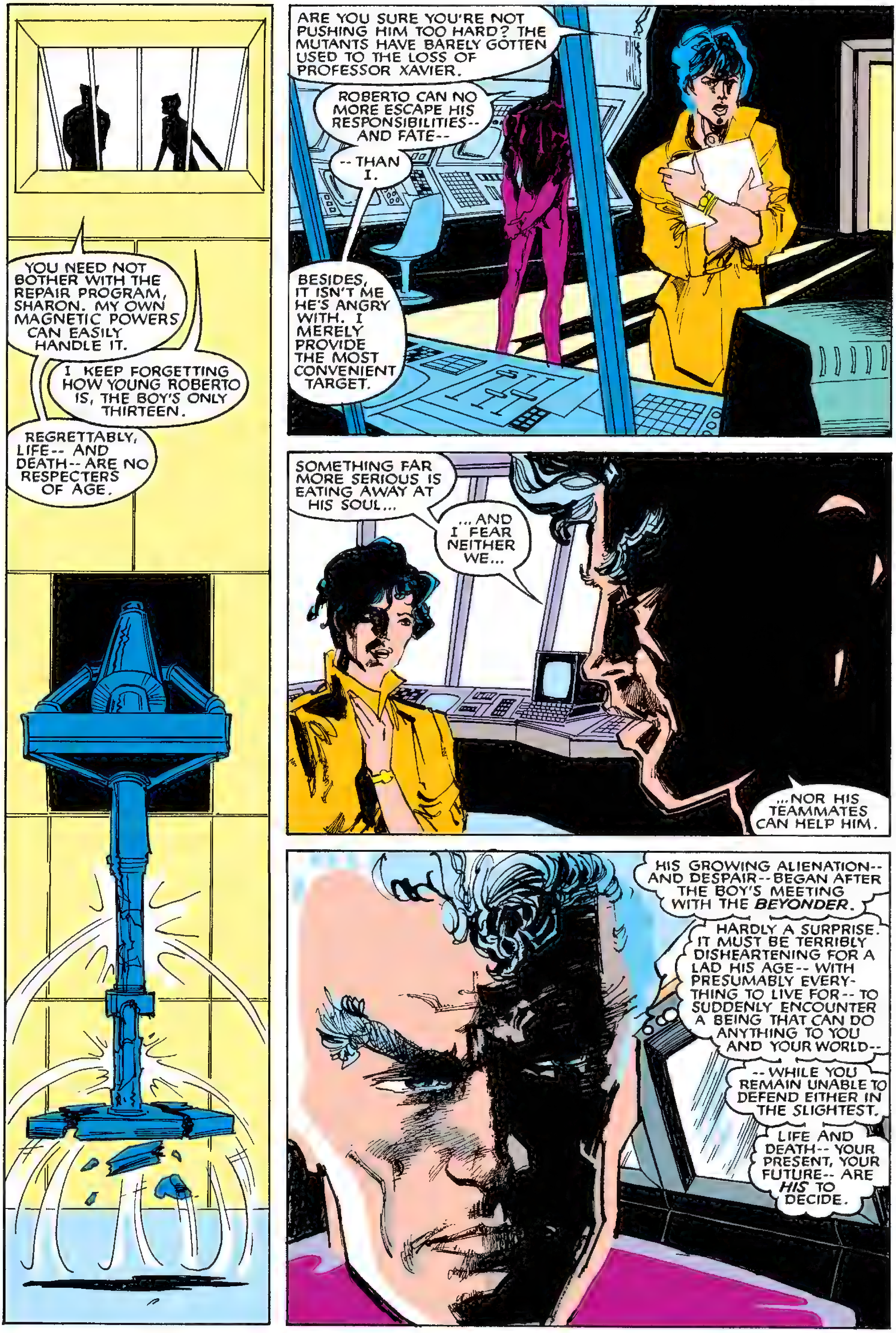
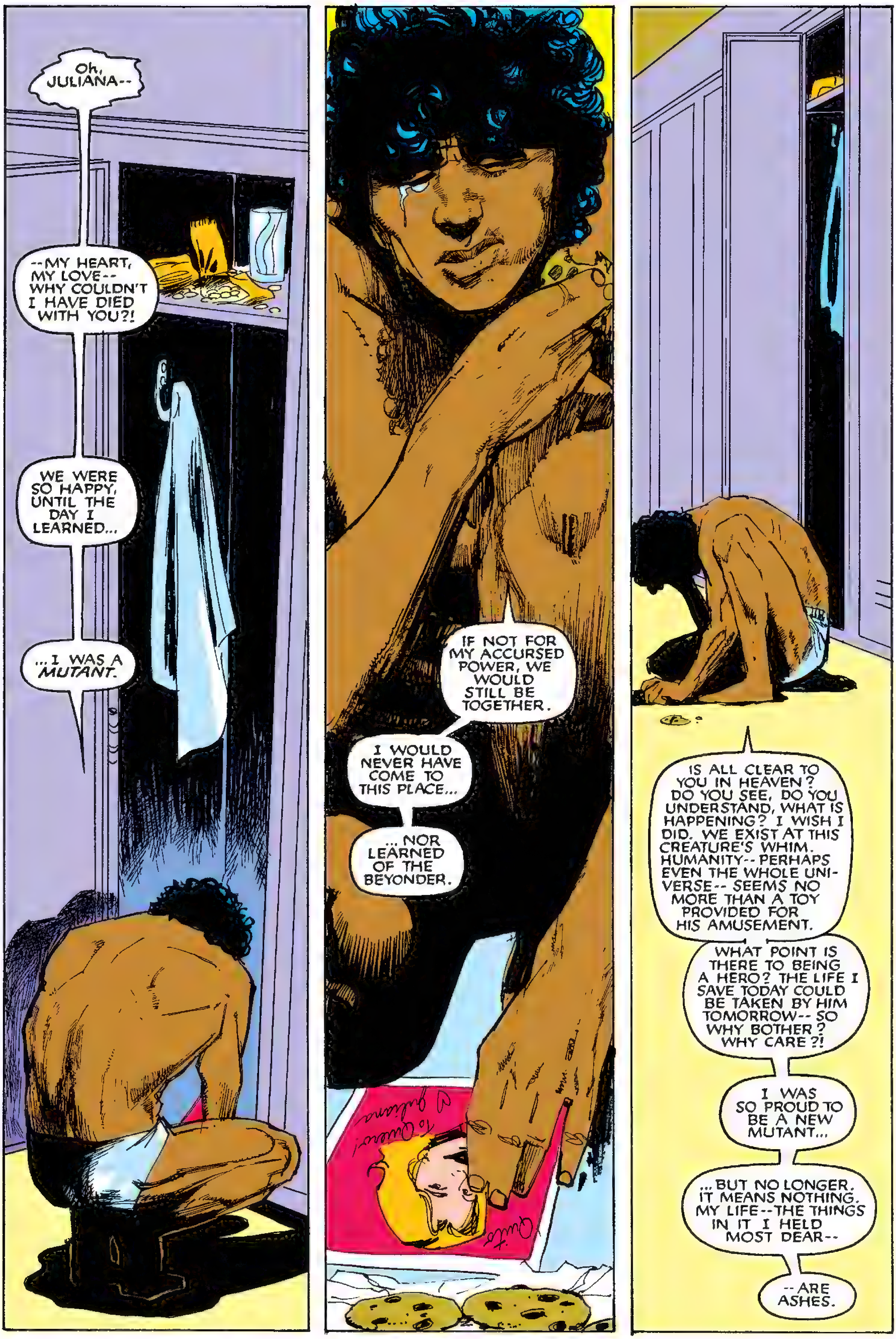
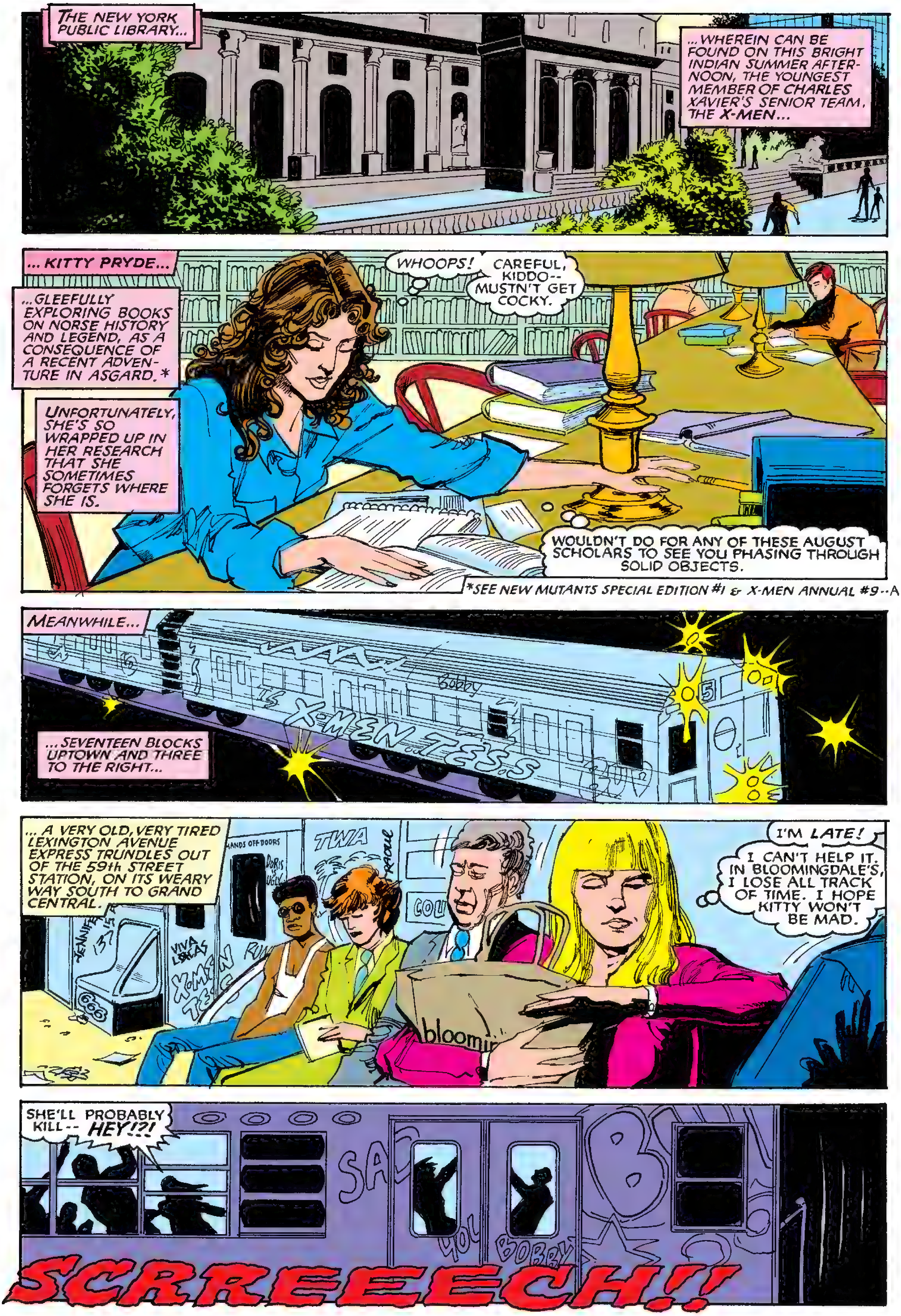

STAN LEE PRESENTS...
SUBWAY TO SALVATION!
ON A DAY MUCH LIKE ANY OTHER...
...A STUDENT-- ROBERTO DaCOSTA BY NAME, ALSO KNOWN AS SUNSPOT-- TAKES A MOST UNIQUE TEST AT PROFESSOR CHARLES XAVIER'S SCHOOL FOR GIFTED YOUNGSTERS.
WHAT MAKES THE YOUNG BRAZILIAN SPECIAL IS THAT HE IS A MUTANT--ONE OF THE MOSTLY OUTCAST OFFSHOOT OF HUMANITY BORN WITH EXTRAORDINARY POWERS AND ABILITIES--HIS SPECIFIC "GIFT", PHENOMENAL STRENGTH DERIVED FROM THE SUN.
CHRIS CLAREMONT WRITER
MARY WILSHIRE & BILL SIENKIEWICZ ARTISTS
MICHAEL HIGGINS COLORIST
TOM ORZECHOWSKI LETTERER
ANN NOCENTI EDITOR
JIM SHOOTER EDITOR IN CHIEF


OBSERVING HIS PROGRESS FROM THE CONTROL BOOTH OVERHEAD IS THE SCHOOL'S NEW HEADMASTER, THE MASTER OF MAGNETISM, MAGNETO.
I DON'T LIKE THESE READINGS.
BOBBY'S NEAR HIS LIMIT, MAGNETO. I THINK HE'S HAD ENOUGH.
NOT YET, SHARON.
WHU-OUGH!
THE WEIGHT-- IT JUST DOUBLED!
BOBBY--?!
STAY BACK, THOMAS. LEAVE THE YOUNG MAN BE.
BUT, MAGNETO--?!!
SUNSPOT SHOULD BE MORE THAN ABLE TO RISE TO THIS CHALLENGE...
...WITH A LITTLE EFFORT.
HE DOESN'T THINK I CAN!
HE EXPECTS ME TO FAIL--
--TO GIVE UP!
WELL, I WON'T!
SEE, MY DEAR?
YOU SHOULDN'T HAVE TAKEN THE RISK-- THERE WAS NO NEED!

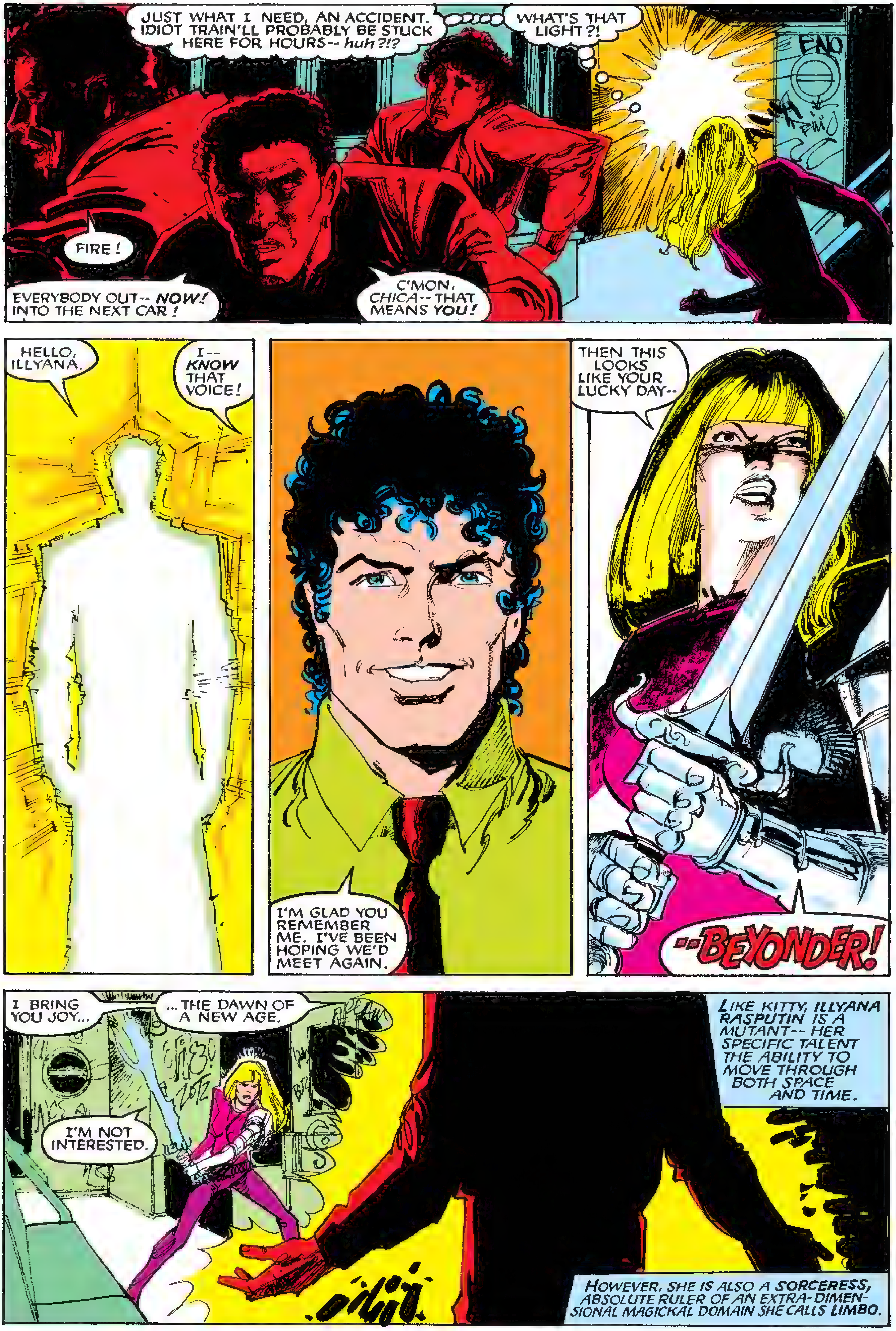

RAKOW!
WHAT IS THE PHRASE YOU AMERICANS USE, NURSE: "NO PAIN, NO GAIN?"
CONGRATULATIONS, SUNSPOT--YOU DID WELL.
THIS IS WHAT I THINK OF YOUR PRAISE--
--AND OF YOUR STUPID *TEST!*
WHAT'S THE REASON FOR THIS, MAGNETO?! I LEARNED TO HANDLE MY STRENGTH LONG AGO-- I'M HAPPY THE WAY I AM--
--WHY ARE YOU SO DETERMINED TO INCREASE MY CAPABILITIES?!
THE TIME MAY COME, LAD, WHEN THEY MAY BE NEEDED.
DO YOU WANT TO BE FOUND WANTING?
YOU SPEAK AS IF I WAS ONE OF THE *X-MEN!*
BUT I'M *NOT,* MAGNETO-- AND I DON'T WISH TO BE! I CAME TO XAVIER'S TO LEARN HOW TO COPE WITH WHO AND WHAT I AM. I'VE DONE THAT!
ALL I WANT NOW IS TO LIVE AS SANE AND NORMAL A LIFE AS I CAN. I DON'T WANT TO BE A SUPER HERO, I DON'T WANT ANY PART OF THAT CRAZY EXISTENCE!
I WANT TO BE LEFT ALONE--
--IS THAT TOO MUCH TO ASK?!

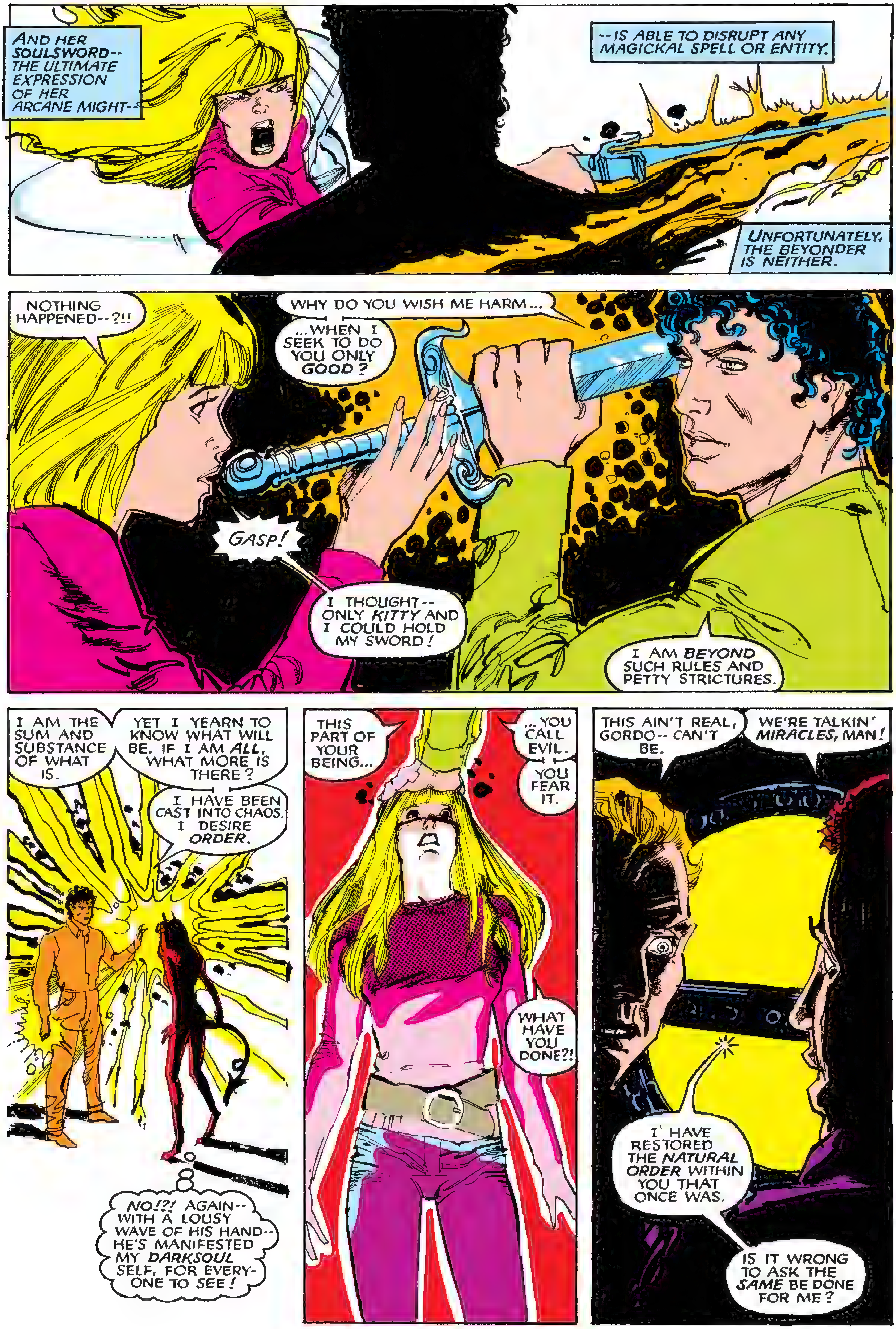

YOU NEED NOT BOTHER WITH THE REPAIR PROGRAM, SHARON. MY OWN MAGNETIC POWERS CAN EASILY HANDLE IT.
I KEEP FORGETTING HOW YOUNG ROBERTO IS, THE BOY'S ONLY THIRTEEN.
REGRETTABLY, LIFE-- AND DEATH-- ARE NO RESPECTERS OF AGE.
ARE YOU SURE YOU'RE NOT PUSHING HIM TOO HARD? THE MUTANTS HAVE BARELY GOTTEN USED TO THE LOSS OF PROFESSOR XAVIER.
ROBERTO CAN NO MORE ESCAPE HIS RESPONSIBILITIES-- AND FATE--
-- THAN I.
BESIDES, IT ISN'T ME HE'S ANGRY WITH. I MERELY PROVIDE THE MOST CONVENIENT TARGET.
SOMETHING FAR MORE SERIOUS IS EATING AWAY AT HIS SOUL...
...AND I FEAR NEITHER WE...
...NOR HIS TEAMMATES CAN HELP HIM.
HIS GROWING ALIENATION-- AND DESPAIR-- BEGAN AFTER THE BOY'S MEETING WITH THE BEYONDER.
HARDLY A SURPRISE. IT MUST BE TERRIBLY DISHEARTENING FOR A LAD HIS AGE-- WITH PRESUMABLY EVERYTHING TO LIVE FOR-- TO SUDDENLY ENCOUNTER A BEING THAT CAN DO ANYTHING TO YOU AND YOUR WORLD--
-- WHILE YOU REMAIN UNABLE TO DEFEND EITHER IN THE SLIGHTEST.
LIFE AND DEATH-- YOUR PRESENT, YOUR FUTURE-- ARE HIS TO DECIDE.

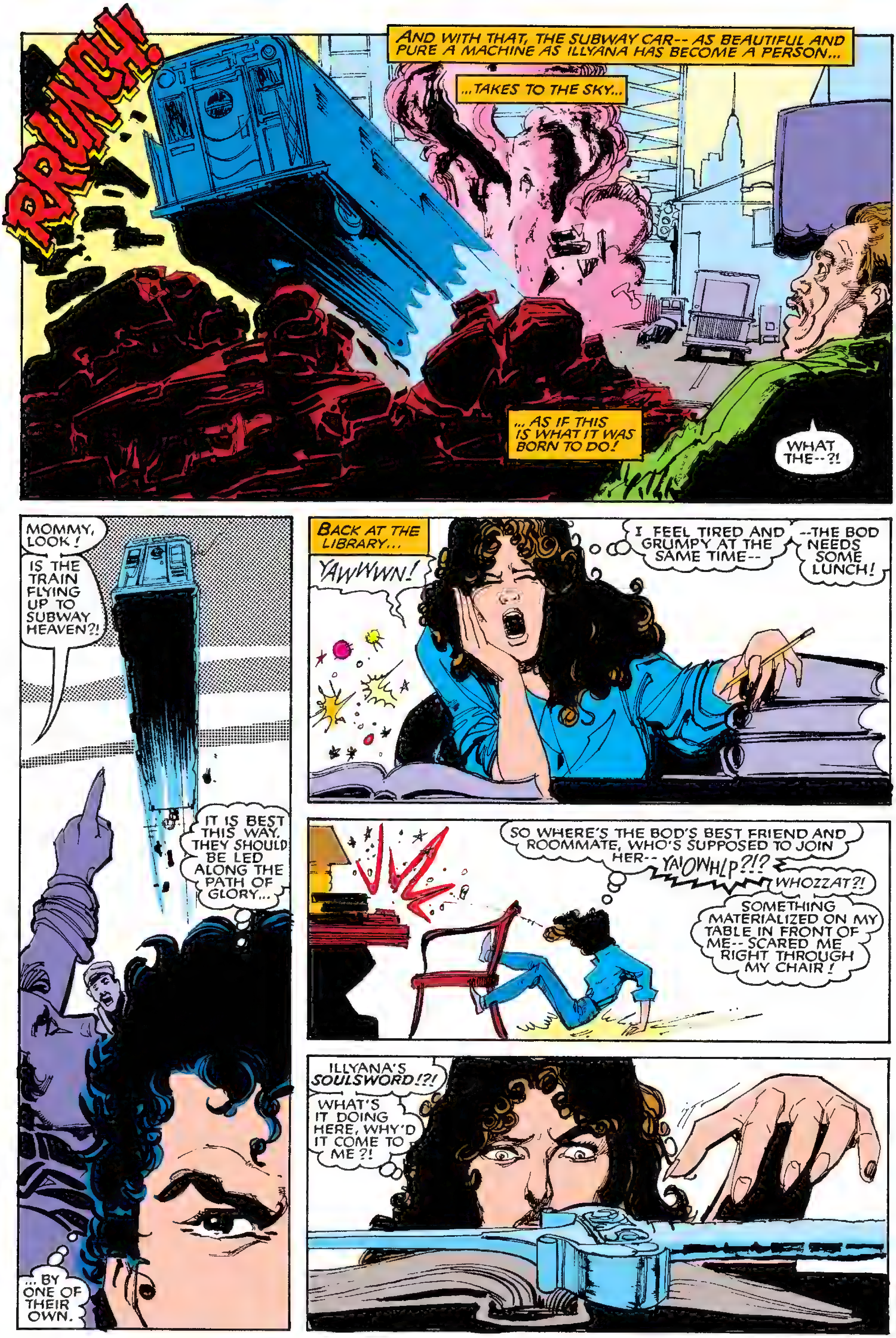

Oh, JULIANA--
--MY HEART, MY LOVE-- WHY COULDN'T I HAVE DIED WITH YOU?!
WE WERE SO HAPPY, UNTIL THE DAY I LEARNED...
...I WAS A *MUTANT*.
IF NOT FOR MY ACCURSED POWER, WE WOULD STILL BE TOGETHER.
I WOULD NEVER HAVE COME TO THIS PLACE...
...NOR LEARNED OF THE BEYONDER.
To Queri! ♡ Juliana
Quite
IS ALL CLEAR TO YOU IN HEAVEN? DO YOU SEE, DO YOU UNDERSTAND, WHAT IS HAPPENING? I WISH I DID. WE EXIST AT THIS CREATURE'S WHIM. HUMANITY-- PERHAPS EVEN THE WHOLE UNIVERSE-- SEEMS NO MORE THAN A TOY PROVIDED FOR HIS AMUSEMENT.
WHAT POINT IS THERE TO BEING A HERO? THE LIFE I SAVE TODAY COULD BE TAKEN BY HIM TOMORROW-- SO WHY BOTHER? WHY CARE?!
I WAS SO PROUD TO BE A NEW MUTANT...
...BUT NO LONGER. IT MEANS NOTHING. MY LIFE--THE THINGS IN IT I HELD MOST DEAR--
--ARE ASHES.

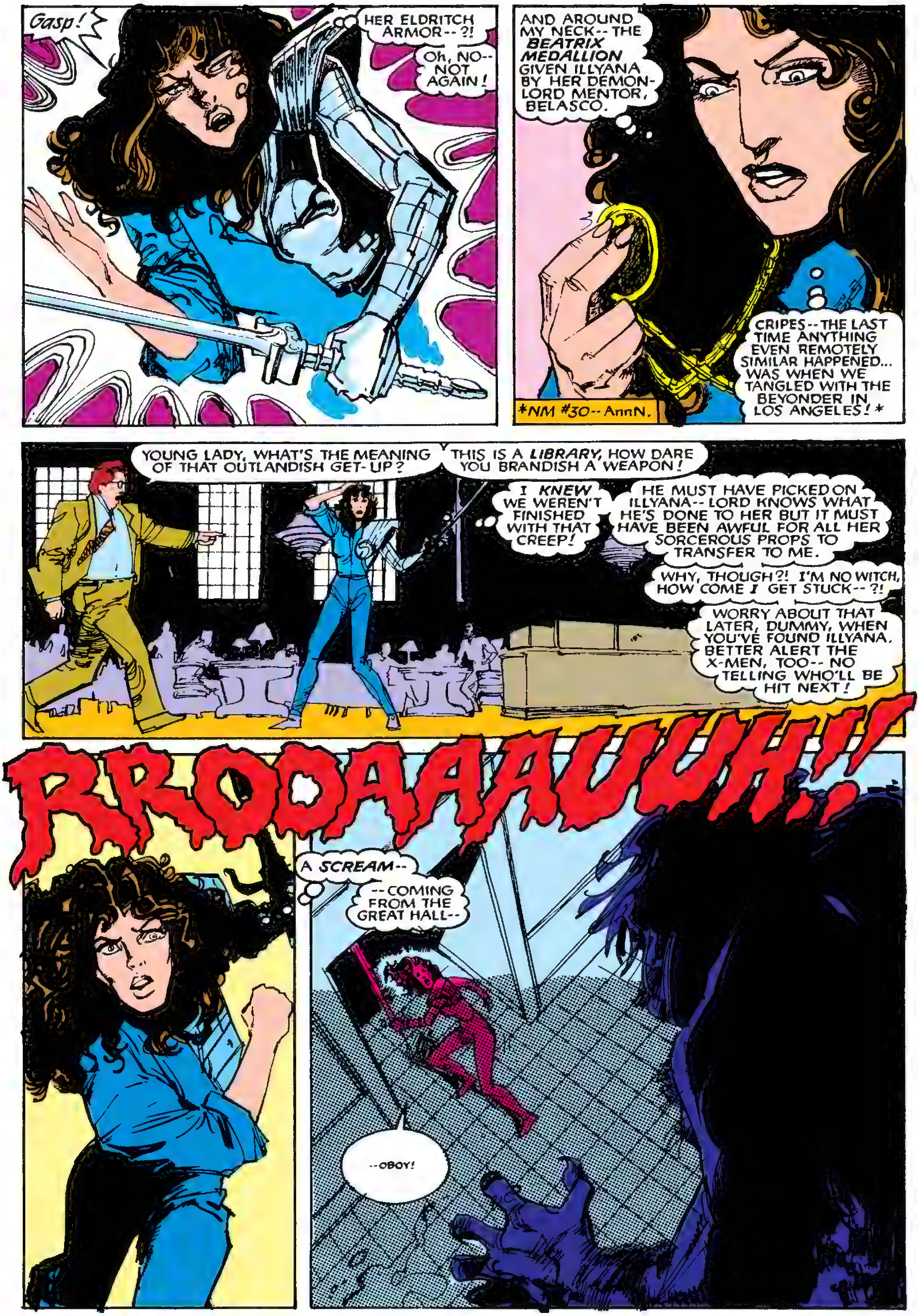

THE NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY...
...WHEREIN CAN BE FOUND ON THIS BRIGHT INDIAN SUMMER AFTERNOON, THE YOUNGEST MEMBER OF CHARLES XAVIER'S SENIOR TEAM, THE X-MEN...
... KITTY PRYDE...
...GLEEFULLY EXPLORING BOOKS ON NORSE HISTORY AND LEGEND, AS A CONSEQUENCE OF A RECENT ADVENTURE IN ASGARD.*
UNFORTUNATELY, SHE'S SO WRAPPED UP IN HER RESEARCH THAT SHE SOMETIMES FORGETS WHERE SHE IS.
WHOOPS!
CAREFUL, KIDDO-- MUSTN'T GET COCKY.
WOULDN'T DO FOR ANY OF THESE AUGUST SCHOLARS TO SEE YOU PHASING THROUGH SOLID OBJECTS.
MEANWHILE...
Bobby
X-MEN TESS
...SEVENTEEN BLOCKS UPTOWN AND THREE TO THE RIGHT...
... A VERY OLD, VERY TIRED LEXINGTON AVENUE EXPRESS TRUNDLES OUT OF THE 59th STREET STATION, ON ITS WEARY WAY SOUTH TO GRAND CENTRAL.
HANDS OFF DOORS
DORIS IS UGLY
TWA
VIVA LOCAS
X-MEN TESS
bloomin
I'M LATE!
I CAN'T HELP IT. IN BLOOMINGDALE'S, I LOSE ALL TRACK OF TIME. I HOPE KITTY WON'T BE MAD.
SHE'LL PROBABLY KILL-- HEY!?!
BOBBY
SCRREEECH!!

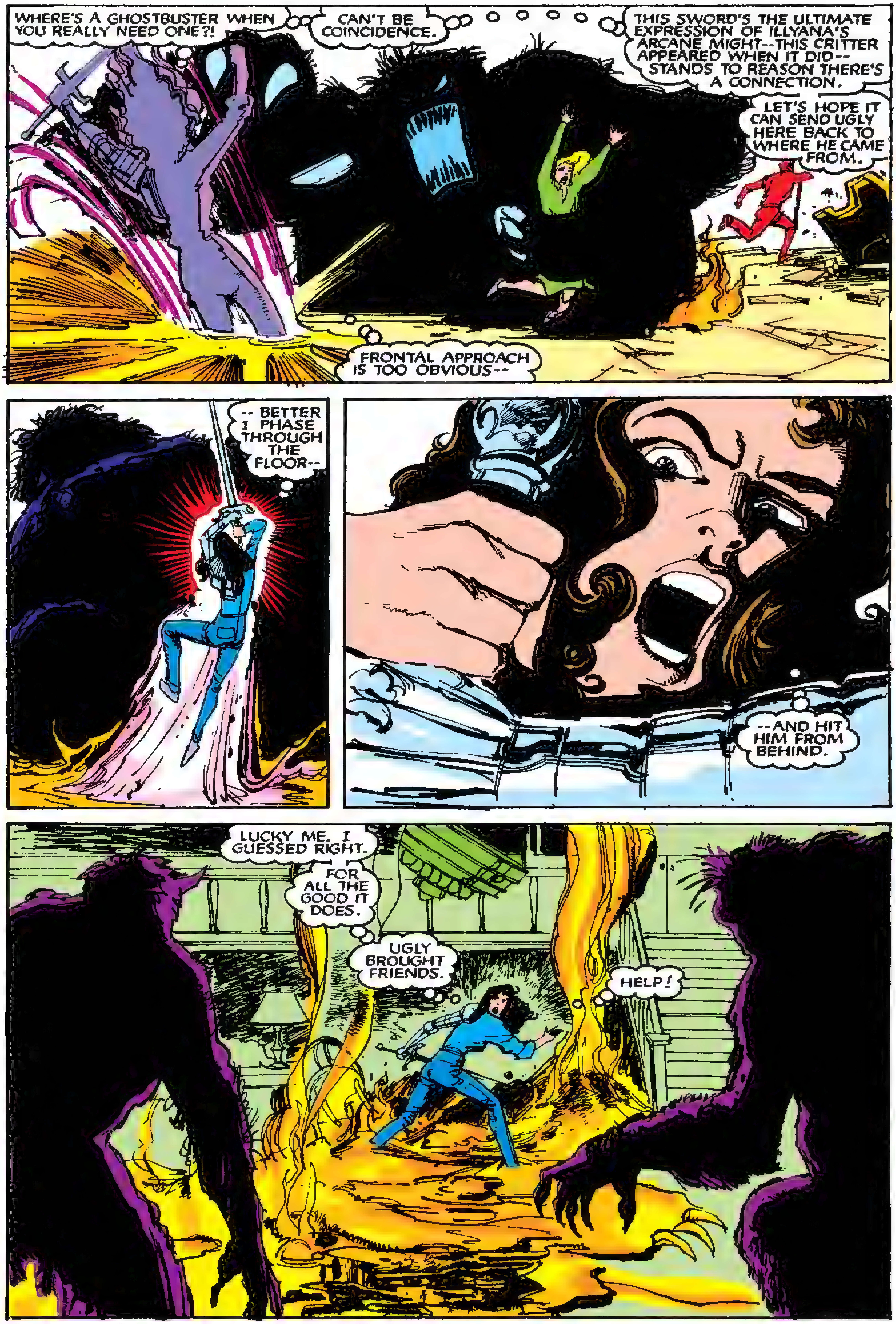
*SEE NEW MUTANTS SPECIAL EDITION #1 & X-MEN ANNUAL #9--A.

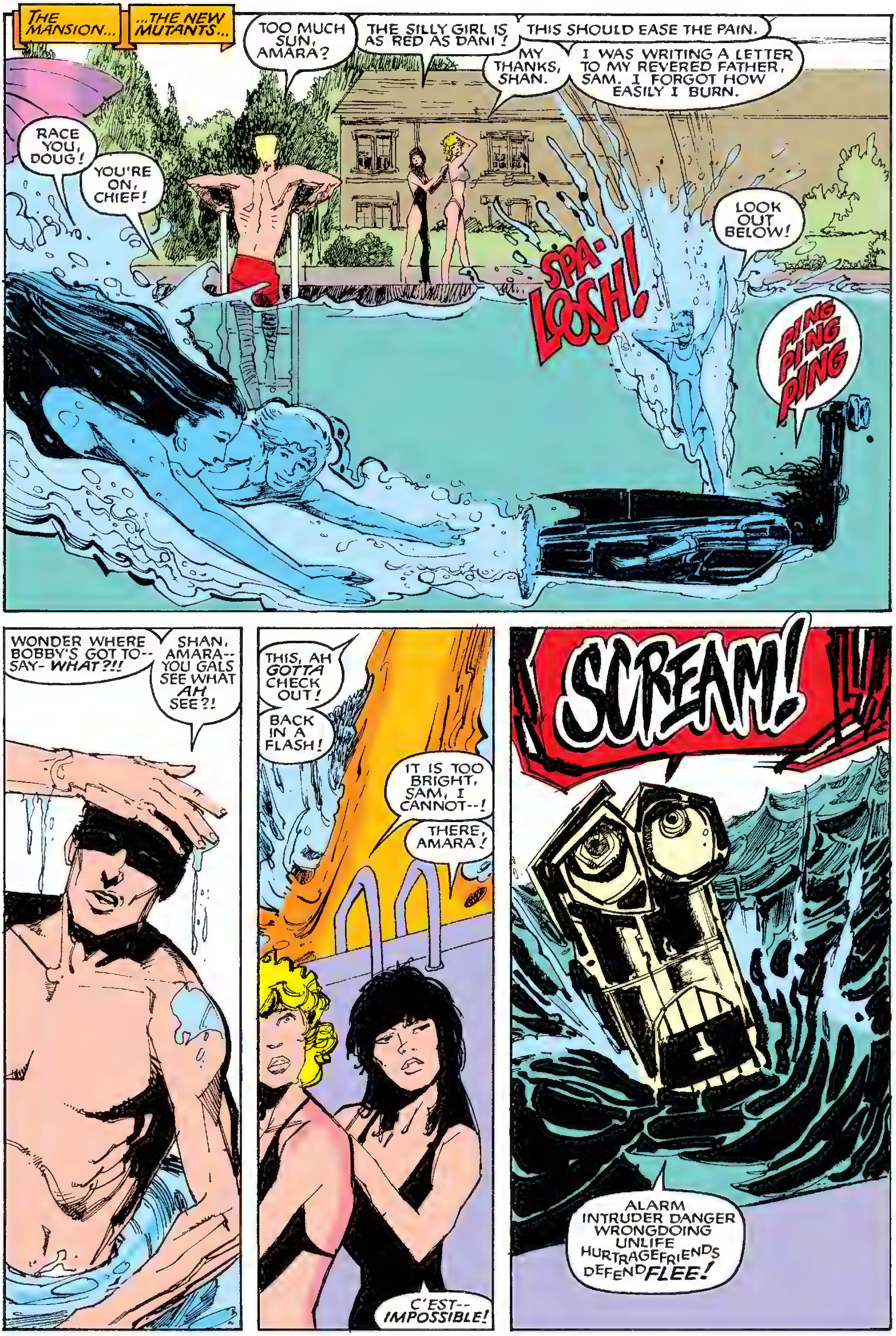

JUST WHAT I NEED, AN ACCIDENT. IDIOT TRAIN'LL PROBABLY BE STUCK HERE FOR HOURS-- *huh?!?*
WHAT'S THAT LIGHT?!
FIRE!
EVERYBODY OUT-- **NOW!** INTO THE NEXT CAR!
C'MON, *CHICA*-- THAT MEANS **YOU!**
HELLO, ILLYANA.
I-- **KNOW** THAT VOICE!
I'M GLAD YOU REMEMBER ME. I'VE BEEN HOPING WE'D MEET AGAIN.
THEN THIS LOOKS LIKE YOUR LUCKY DAY--
--BEYONDER!
I BRING YOU JOY...
...THE DAWN OF A NEW AGE.
I'M NOT INTERESTED.
*LIKE KITTY, **ILLYANA RASPUTIN** IS A MUTANT-- HER SPECIFIC TALENT THE ABILITY TO MOVE THROUGH BOTH SPACE AND TIME.*
*HOWEVER, SHE IS ALSO A **SORCERESS**, ABSOLUTE RULER OF AN EXTRA-DIMENSIONAL MAGICKAL DOMAIN SHE CALLS **LIMBO**.*

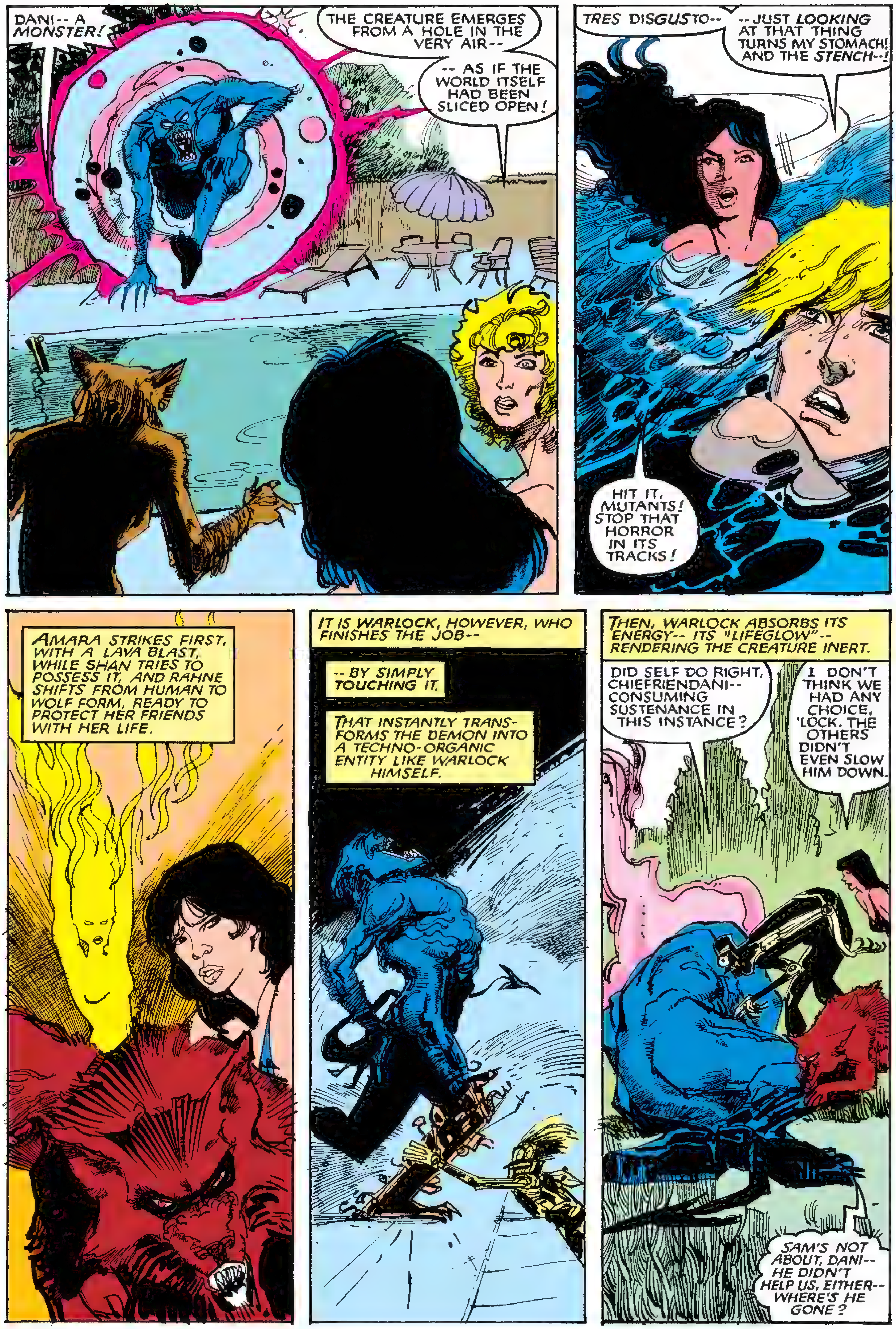

AND HER SOULSWORD-- THE ULTIMATE EXPRESSION OF HER ARCANE MIGHT--
--IS ABLE TO DISRUPT ANY MAGICKAL SPELL OR ENTITY.
UNFORTUNATELY, THE BEYONDER IS NEITHER.
NOTHING HAPPENED--?!!
WHY DO YOU WISH ME HARM...
...WHEN I SEEK TO DO YOU ONLY GOOD?
GASP!
I THOUGHT-- ONLY KITTY AND I COULD HOLD MY SWORD!
I AM BEYOND SUCH RULES AND PETTY STRICTURES.
I AM THE SUM AND SUBSTANCE OF WHAT IS.
YET I YEARN TO KNOW WHAT WILL BE. IF I AM ALL, WHAT MORE IS THERE?
I HAVE BEEN CAST INTO CHAOS. I DESIRE ORDER.
NO!?! AGAIN-- WITH A LOUSY WAVE OF HIS HAND-- HE'S MANIFESTED MY DARKSOUL SELF, FOR EVERYONE TO SEE!
THIS PART OF YOUR BEING...
...YOU CALL EVIL.
YOU FEAR IT.
WHAT HAVE YOU DONE?!
THIS AIN'T REAL, GORDO-- CAN'T BE.
WE'RE TALKIN' MIRACLES, MAN!
I HAVE RESTORED THE NATURAL ORDER WITHIN YOU THAT ONCE WAS.
IS IT WRONG TO ASK THE SAME BE DONE FOR ME?

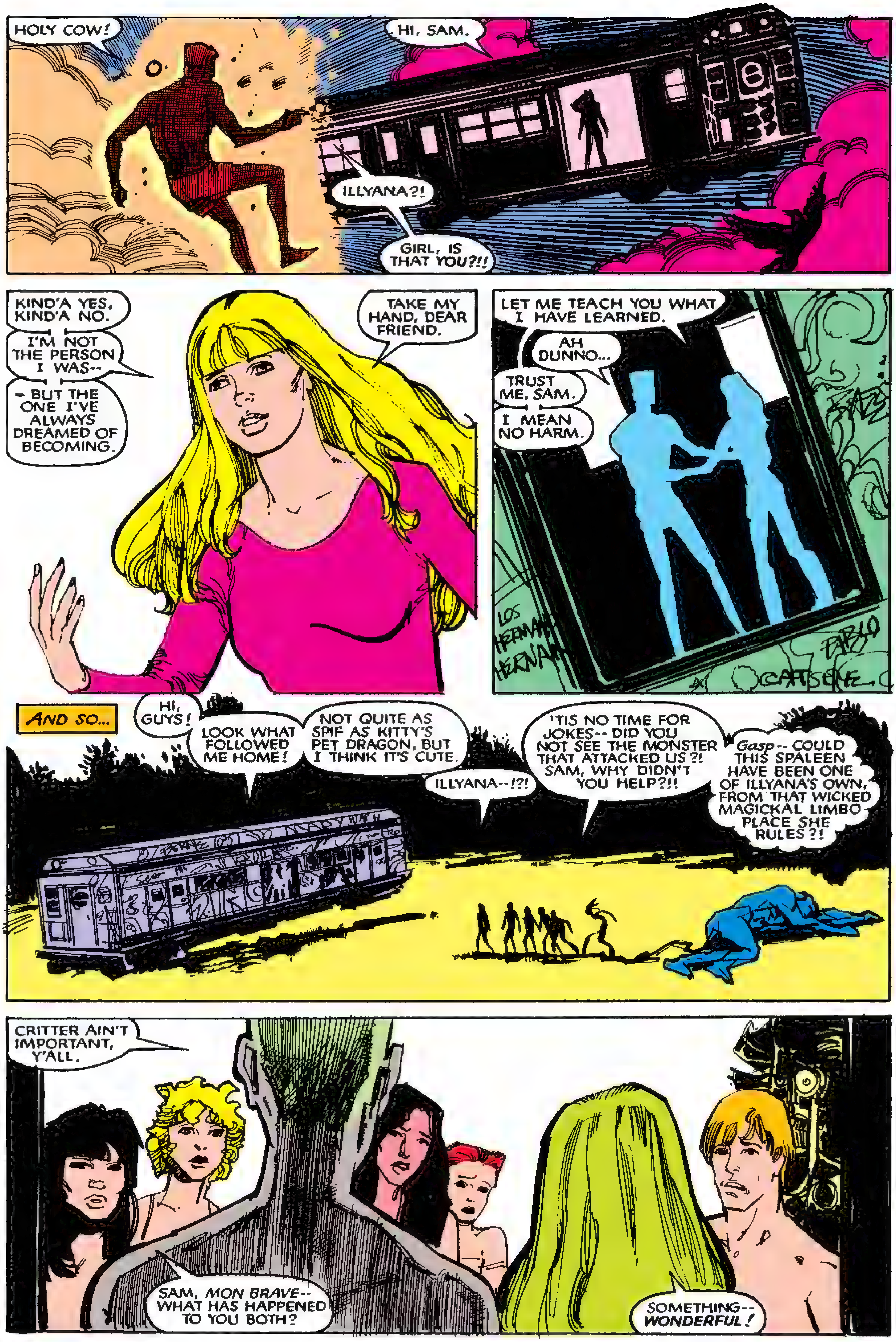

BRUNCH!
AND WITH THAT, THE SUBWAY CAR-- AS BEAUTIFUL AND PURE A MACHINE AS ILLYANA HAS BECOME A PERSON...
...TAKES TO THE SKY...
...AS IF THIS IS WHAT IT WAS BORN TO DO!
WHAT THE--?!
MOMMY, LOOK!
IS THE TRAIN FLYING UP TO SUBWAY HEAVEN?!
IT IS BEST THIS WAY. THEY SHOULD BE LED ALONG THE PATH OF GLORY...
...BY ONE OF THEIR OWN.
BACK AT THE LIBRARY...
YAWWWN!
I FEEL TIRED AND GRUMPY AT THE SAME TIME--
--THE BOD NEEDS SOME LUNCH!
SO WHERE'S THE BOD'S BEST FRIEND AND ROOMMATE, WHO'S SUPPOSED TO JOIN HER-- YAIOWHLP?!?
WHOZZAT?!
SOMETHING MATERIALIZED ON MY TABLE IN FRONT OF ME-- SCARED ME RIGHT THROUGH MY CHAIR!
ILLYANA'S SOULSWORD!?!
WHAT'S IT DOING HERE, WHY'D IT COME TO ME?!

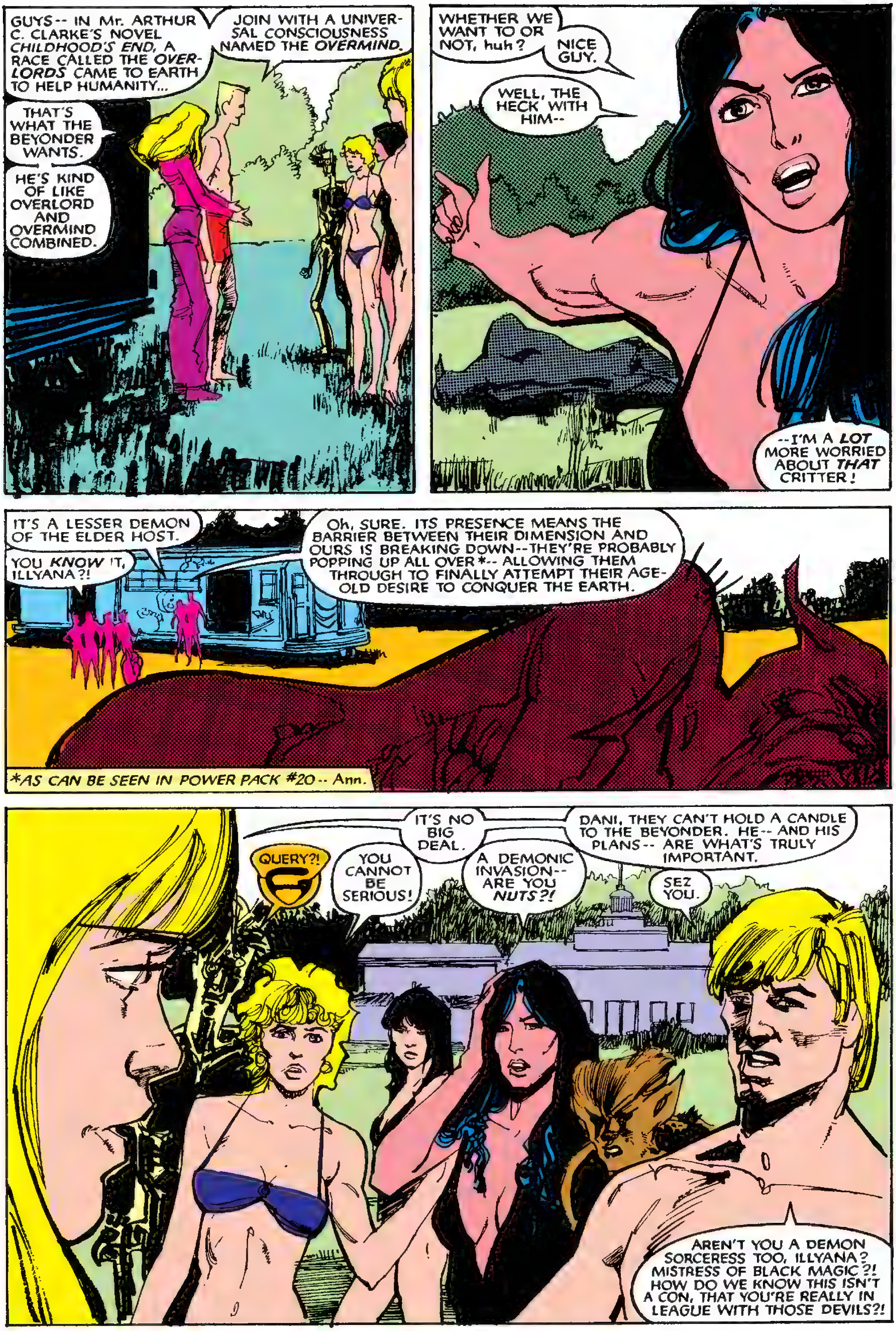

Gasp!
HER ELDRITCH ARMOR--?!
Oh, NO-- NOT AGAIN!
AND AROUND MY NECK-- THE BEATRIX MEDALLION GIVEN ILLYANA BY HER DEMON-LORD MENTOR, BELASCO.
CRIPES--THE LAST TIME ANYTHING EVEN REMOTELY SIMILAR HAPPENED... WAS WHEN WE TANGLED WITH THE BEYONDER IN LOS ANGELES!*
*NM #30--AnnN.
YOUNG LADY, WHAT'S THE MEANING OF THAT OUTLANDISH GET-UP?
THIS IS A LIBRARY, HOW DARE YOU BRANDISH A WEAPON!
I KNEW WE WEREN'T FINISHED WITH THAT CREEP!
HE MUST HAVE PICKED ON ILLYANA-- LORD KNOWS WHAT HE'S DONE TO HER BUT IT MUST HAVE BEEN AWFUL FOR ALL HER SORCEROUS PROPS TO TRANSFER TO ME.
WHY, THOUGH?! I'M NO WITCH, HOW COME I GET STUCK--?!
WORRY ABOUT THAT LATER, DUMMY, WHEN YOU'VE FOUND ILLYANA. BETTER ALERT THE X-MEN, TOO-- NO TELLING WHO'LL BE HIT NEXT!
RROOAAAAUUH!!
A SCREAM--
--COMING FROM THE GREAT HALL--
--OBOY!

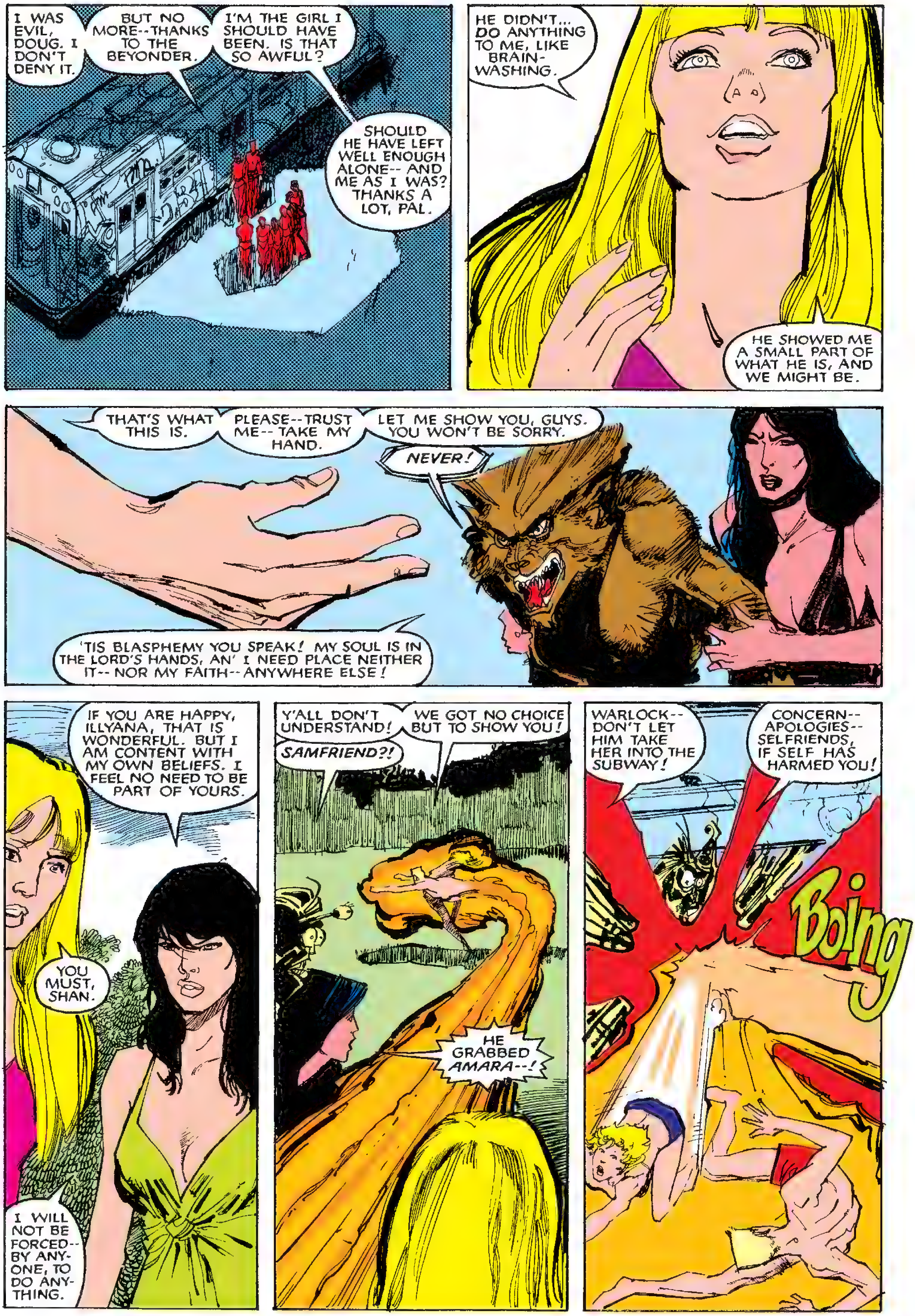

WHERE'S A GHOSTBUSTER WHEN YOU REALLY NEED ONE?!
CAN'T BE COINCIDENCE.
THIS SWORD'S THE ULTIMATE EXPRESSION OF ILLYANA'S ARCANE MIGHT--THIS CRITTER APPEARED WHEN IT DID-- STANDS TO REASON THERE'S A CONNECTION.
LET'S HOPE IT CAN SEND UGLY HERE BACK TO WHERE HE CAME FROM.
FRONTAL APPROACH IS TOO OBVIOUS--
-- BETTER I PHASE THROUGH THE FLOOR--
--AND HIT HIM FROM BEHIND.
LUCKY ME. I GUESSED RIGHT.
FOR ALL THE GOOD IT DOES.
UGLY BROUGHT FRIENDS.
HELP!

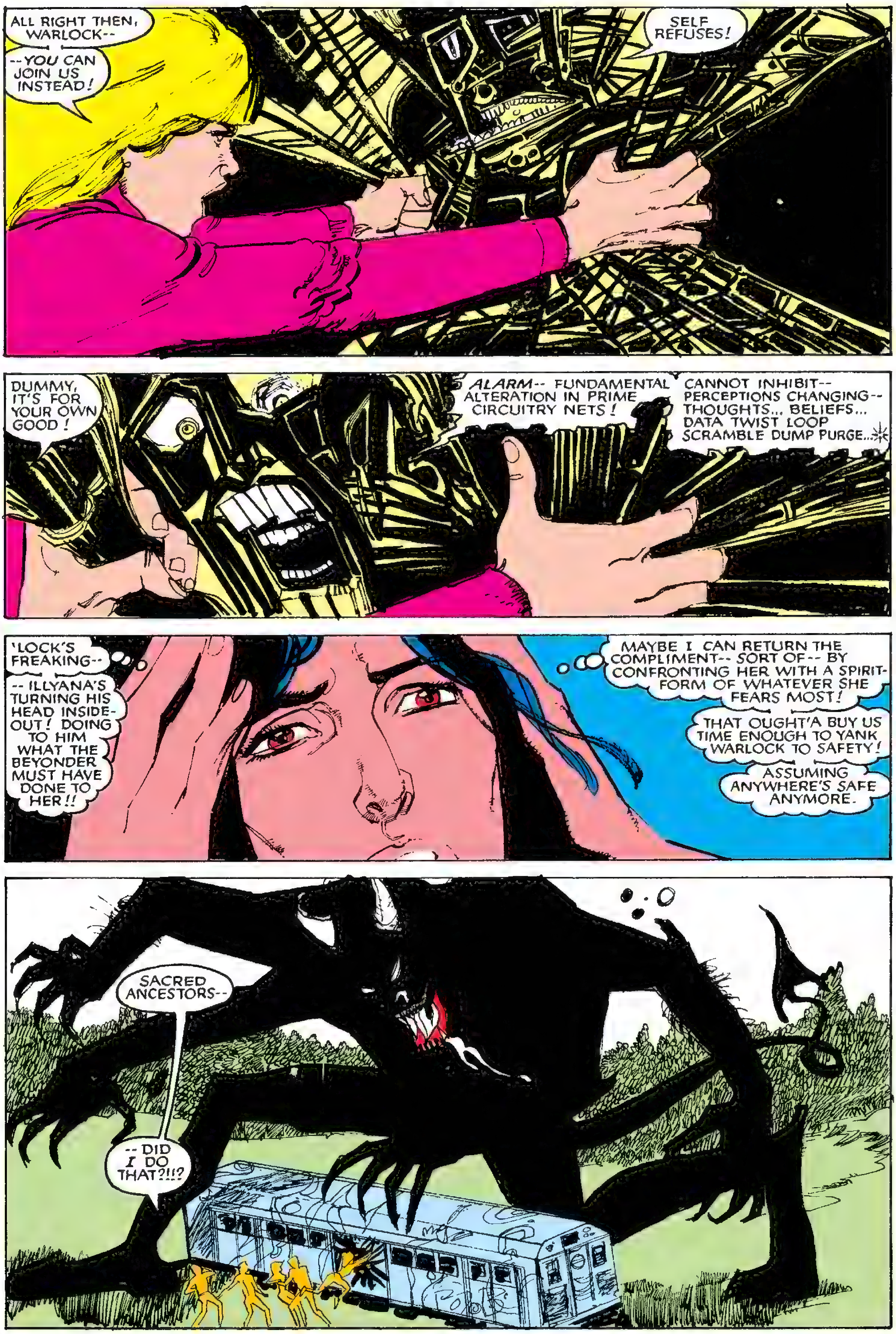

THE MANSION...
...THE NEW MUTANTS...
TOO MUCH SUN, AMARA?
THE SILLY GIRL IS AS RED AS DANI!
THIS SHOULD EASE THE PAIN.
MY THANKS, SHAN.
I WAS WRITING A LETTER TO MY REVERED FATHER, SAM. I FORGOT HOW EASILY I BURN.
RACE YOU, DOUG!
YOU'RE ON, CHIEF!
SPA-LOOSH!
LOOK OUT BELOW!
PING PING PING
WONDER WHERE BOBBY'S GOT TO--SAY- WHAT?!!
SHAN, AMARA--YOU GALS SEE WHAT AH SEE?!
THIS, AH GOTTA CHECK OUT!
BACK IN A FLASH!
IT IS TOO BRIGHT, SAM, I CANNOT--!
THERE, AMARA!
C'EST--IMPOSSIBLE!
SCREAM!
ALARM INTRUDER DANGER WRONGDOING UNLIFE HURTRAGEFRIENDS DEFENDFLEE!

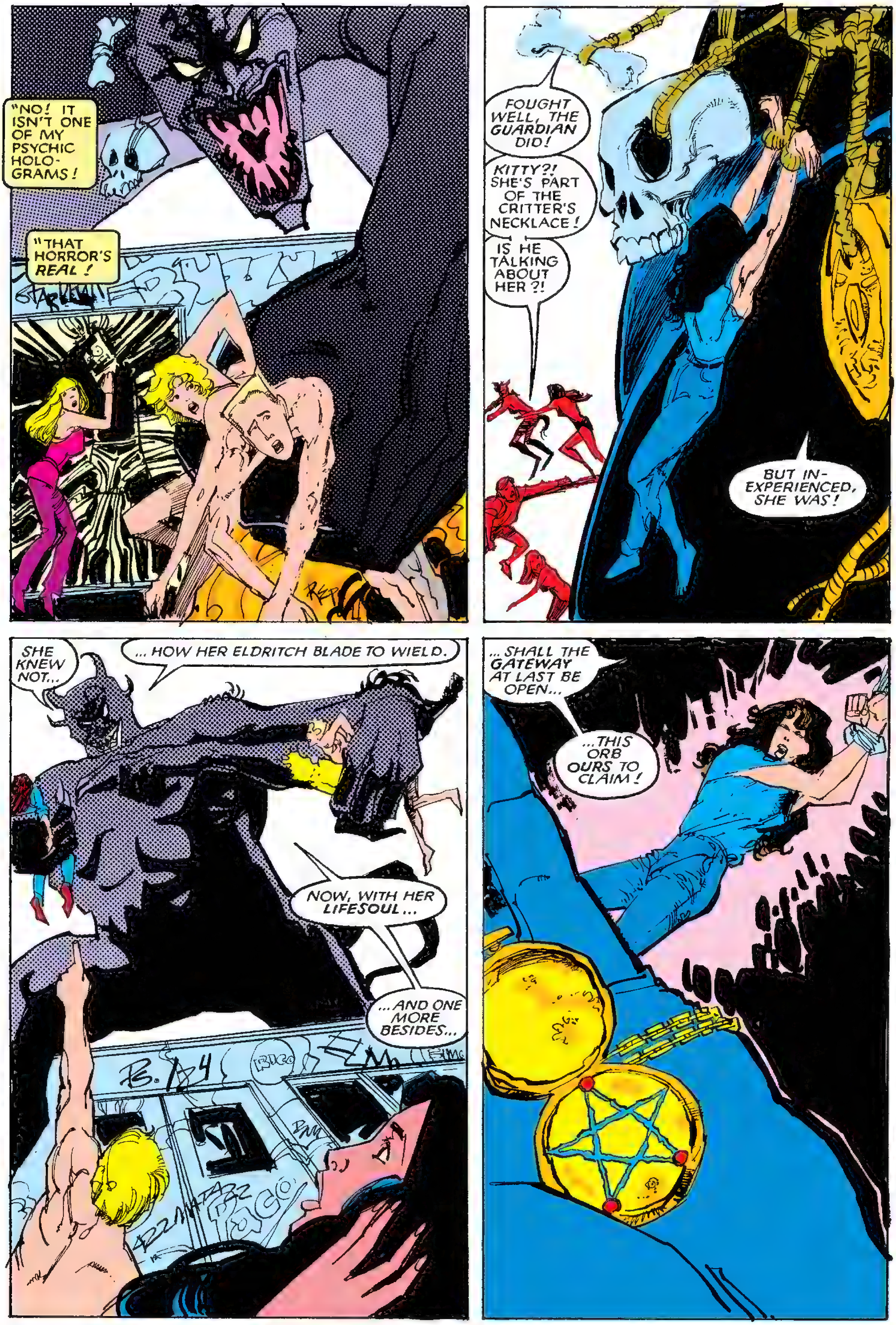

DANI-- A MONSTER!
THE CREATURE EMERGES FROM A HOLE IN THE VERY AIR--
-- AS IF THE WORLD ITSELF HAD BEEN SLICED OPEN!
TRES DISGUSTO--
--JUST LOOKING AT THAT THING TURNS MY STOMACH! AND THE STENCH--!
HIT IT, MUTANTS! STOP THAT HORROR IN ITS TRACKS!
AMARA STRIKES FIRST, WITH A LAVA BLAST, WHILE SHAN TRIES TO POSSESS IT, AND RAHNE SHIFTS FROM HUMAN TO WOLF FORM, READY TO PROTECT HER FRIENDS WITH HER LIFE.
IT IS WARLOCK, HOWEVER, WHO FINISHES THE JOB--
--BY SIMPLY TOUCHING IT.
THAT INSTANTLY TRANSFORMS THE DEMON INTO A TECHNO-ORGANIC ENTITY LIKE WARLOCK HIMSELF.
THEN, WARLOCK ABSORBS ITS ENERGY-- ITS "LIFEGLOW"-- RENDERING THE CREATURE INERT.
DID SELF DO RIGHT, CHIEFRIENDANI-- CONSUMING SUSTENANCE IN THIS INSTANCE?
I DON'T THINK WE HAD ANY CHOICE, 'LOCK. THE OTHERS DIDN'T EVEN SLOW HIM DOWN.
SAM'S NOT ABOUT, DANI-- HE DIDN'T HELP US, EITHER-- WHERE'S HE GONE?

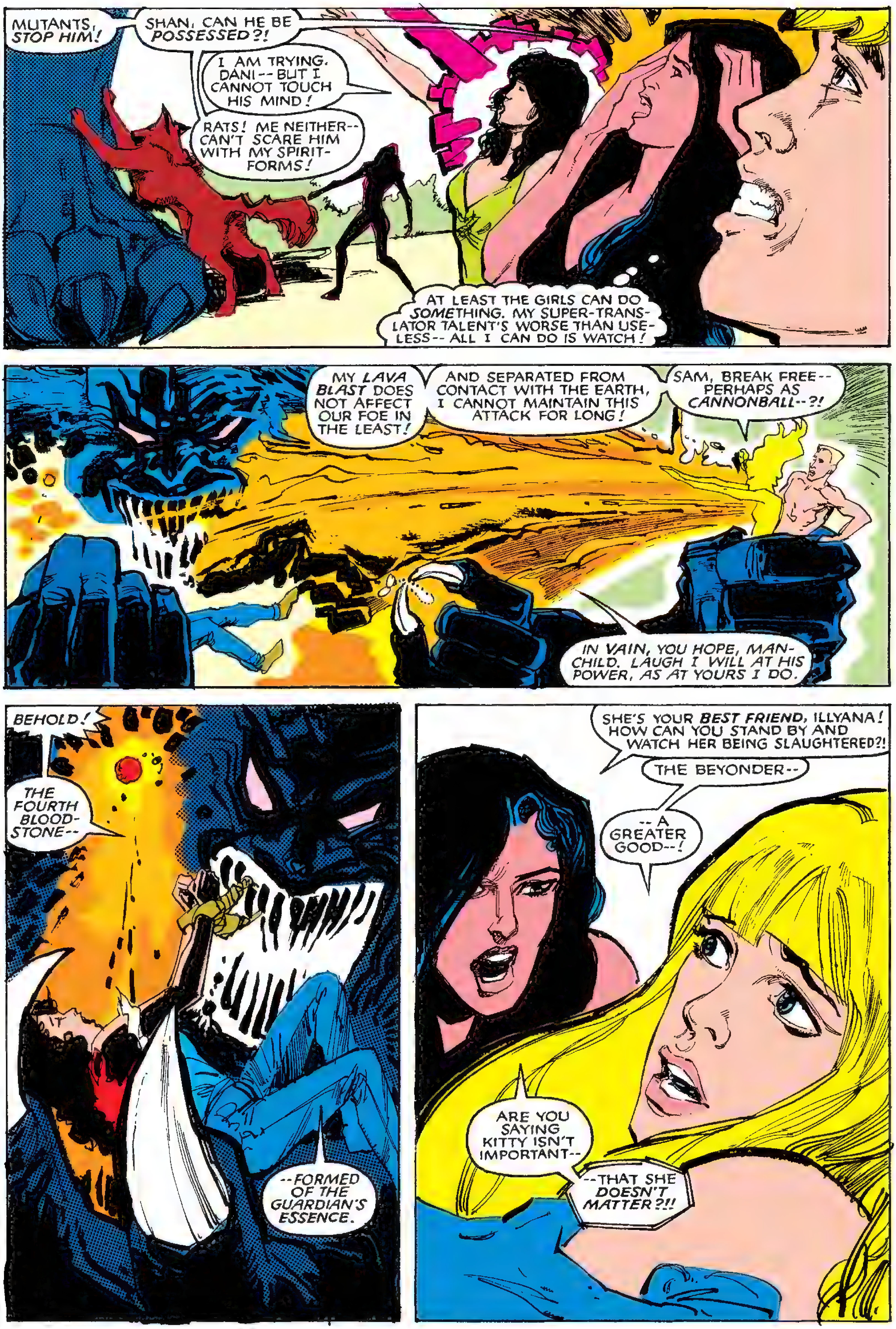

HOLY COW!
HI, SAM.
ILLYANA?!
GIRL, IS THAT YOU?!!
KIND'A YES, KIND'A NO.
I'M NOT THE PERSON I WAS--
- BUT THE ONE I'VE ALWAYS DREAMED OF BECOMING.
TAKE MY HAND, DEAR FRIEND.
LET ME TEACH YOU WHAT I HAVE LEARNED.
AH DUNNO...
TRUST ME, SAM.
I MEAN NO HARM.
AND SO...
HI, GUYS!
LOOK WHAT FOLLOWED ME HOME!
NOT QUITE AS SPIF AS KITTY'S PET DRAGON, BUT I THINK IT'S CUTE.
ILLYANA--!?!
'TIS NO TIME FOR JOKES-- DID YOU NOT SEE THE MONSTER THAT ATTACKED US?! SAM, WHY DIDN'T YOU HELP?!!
Gasp-- COULD THIS SPALEEN HAVE BEEN ONE OF ILLYANA'S OWN, FROM THAT WICKED MAGICKAL LIMBO PLACE SHE RULES?!
CRITTER AIN'T IMPORTANT, Y'ALL.
SAM, MON BRAVE-- WHAT HAS HAPPENED TO YOU BOTH?
SOMETHING-- WONDERFUL!

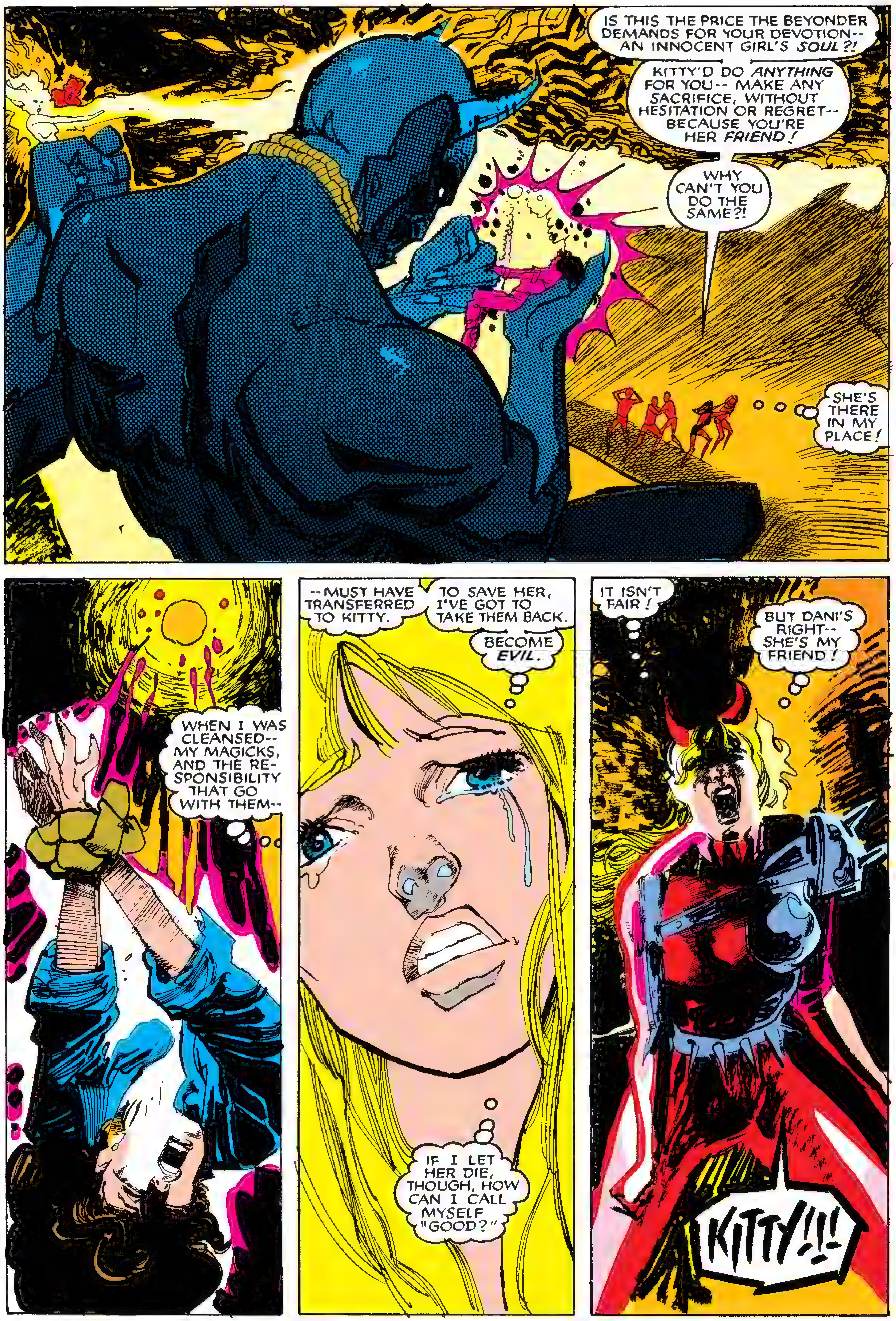

GUYS -- IN Mr. ARTHUR C. CLARKE'S NOVEL *CHILDHOOD'S END*, A RACE CALLED THE *OVERLORDS* CAME TO EARTH TO HELP HUMANITY...
JOIN WITH A UNIVERSAL CONSCIOUSNESS NAMED THE *OVERMIND*.
THAT'S WHAT THE BEYONDER WANTS.
HE'S KIND OF LIKE OVERLORD AND OVERMIND COMBINED.
WHETHER WE WANT TO OR NOT, huh?
NICE GUY.
WELL, THE HECK WITH HIM--
--I'M A ***LOT*** MORE WORRIED ABOUT ***THAT*** CRITTER!
IT'S A LESSER DEMON OF THE ELDER HOST.
YOU ***KNOW*** IT, ILLYANA?!
Oh, SURE. ITS PRESENCE MEANS THE BARRIER BETWEEN THEIR DIMENSION AND OURS IS BREAKING DOWN--THEY'RE PROBABLY POPPING UP ALL OVER*-- ALLOWING THEM THROUGH TO FINALLY ATTEMPT THEIR AGE-OLD DESIRE TO CONQUER THE EARTH.
*AS CAN BE SEEN IN POWER PACK #20 -- Ann.
QUERY?!
YOU CANNOT BE SERIOUS!
IT'S NO BIG DEAL.
A DEMONIC INVASION-- ARE YOU ***NUTS?!***
DANI, THEY CAN'T HOLD A CANDLE TO THE BEYONDER. HE-- AND HIS PLANS-- ARE WHAT'S TRULY IMPORTANT.
SEZ YOU.
AREN'T YOU A DEMON SORCERESS TOO, ILLYANA?! MISTRESS OF BLACK MAGIC?! HOW DO WE KNOW THIS ISN'T A CON, THAT YOU'RE REALLY IN LEAGUE WITH THOSE DEVILS?!

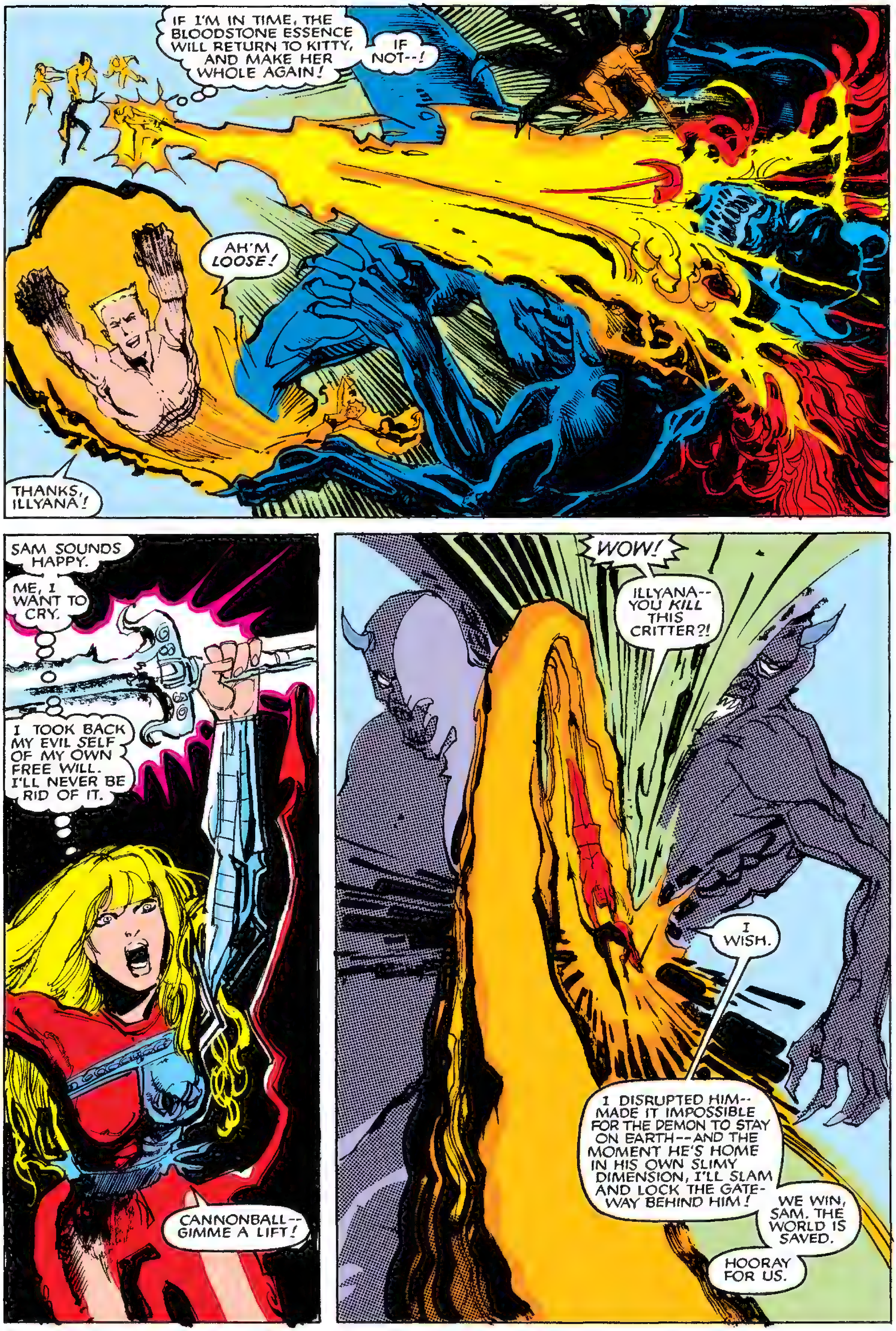

I WAS EVIL, DOUG. I DON'T DENY IT.
BUT NO MORE--THANKS TO THE BEYONDER.
I'M THE GIRL I SHOULD HAVE BEEN. IS THAT SO AWFUL?
SHOULD HE HAVE LEFT WELL ENOUGH ALONE-- AND ME AS I WAS? THANKS A LOT, PAL.
HE DIDN'T... *DO* ANYTHING TO ME, LIKE BRAIN-WASHING.
HE SHOWED ME A SMALL PART OF WHAT HE IS, AND WE MIGHT BE.
THAT'S WHAT THIS IS.
PLEASE--TRUST ME-- TAKE MY HAND.
LET ME SHOW YOU, GUYS. YOU WON'T BE SORRY.
NEVER!
'TIS BLASPHEMY YOU SPEAK! MY SOUL IS IN THE LORD'S HANDS, AN' I NEED PLACE NEITHER IT-- NOR MY FAITH--ANYWHERE ELSE!
IF YOU ARE HAPPY, ILLYANA, THAT IS WONDERFUL. BUT I AM CONTENT WITH MY OWN BELIEFS. I FEEL NO NEED TO BE PART OF YOURS.
YOU MUST, SHAN.
I WILL NOT BE FORCED-- BY ANY-ONE, TO DO ANY-THING.
Y'ALL DON'T UNDERSTAND!
WE GOT NO CHOICE BUT TO SHOW YOU!
SAMFRIEND?!
HE GRABBED *AMARA*--!
WARLOCK-- DON'T LET HIM TAKE HER INTO THE SUBWAY!
CONCERN-- APOLOGIES-- SELFRIENDS, IF SELF HAS HARMED YOU!
Boing

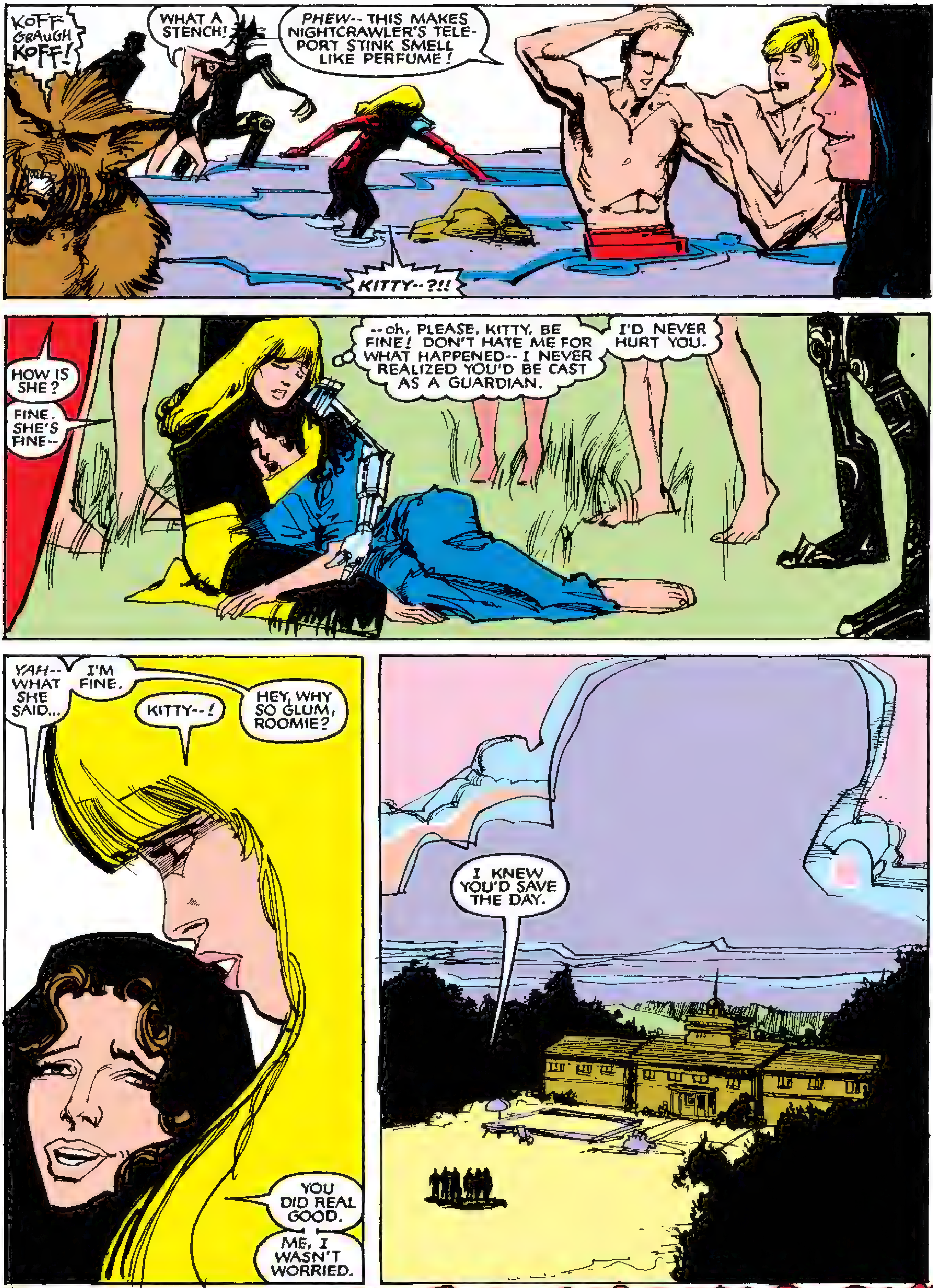

ALL RIGHT THEN, WARLOCK--
--*YOU* CAN JOIN US INSTEAD!
SELF REFUSES!
DUMMY, IT'S FOR YOUR OWN GOOD!
ALARM-- FUNDAMENTAL ALTERATION IN PRIME CIRCUITRY NETS!
CANNOT INHIBIT-- PERCEPTIONS CHANGING-- THOUGHTS... BELIEFS... DATA TWIST LOOP SCRAMBLE DUMP PURGE...
'LOCK'S FREAKING--
-- ILLYANA'S TURNING HIS HEAD INSIDE-OUT! DOING TO HIM WHAT THE BEYONDER MUST HAVE DONE TO HER!!
MAYBE I CAN RETURN THE COMPLIMENT-- SORT OF-- BY CONFRONTING HER WITH A SPIRIT-FORM OF WHATEVER SHE FEARS MOST!
THAT OUGHT'A BUY US TIME ENOUGH TO YANK WARLOCK TO SAFETY!
ASSUMING ANYWHERE'S SAFE ANYMORE.
SACRED ANCESTORS--
-- DID *I* DO THAT?!!?


"NO! IT ISN'T ONE OF MY PSYCHIC HOLOGRAMS!
"THAT HORROR'S *REAL*!
FOUGHT WELL, THE *GUARDIAN* DID!
KITTY?! SHE'S PART OF THE CRITTER'S NECKLACE!
IS HE TALKING ABOUT HER?!
BUT INEXPERIENCED, SHE WAS!
SHE KNEW NOT...
...HOW HER ELDRITCH BLADE TO WIELD.
NOW, WITH HER *LIFESOUL*...
...AND ONE MORE BESIDES...
...SHALL THE *GATEWAY* AT *LAST* BE OPEN...
...THIS ORB OURS TO CLAIM!


MUTANTS, *STOP HIM!*
SHAN, CAN HE BE *POSSESSED?!*
I AM TRYING, DANI -- BUT I CANNOT TOUCH HIS MIND!
RATS! ME NEITHER-- CAN'T SCARE HIM WITH MY SPIRIT-FORMS!
AT LEAST THE GIRLS CAN DO *SOME*THING. MY SUPER-TRANSLATOR TALENT'S WORSE THAN USELESS -- ALL I CAN DO IS WATCH!
MY *LAVA BLAST* DOES NOT AFFECT OUR FOE IN THE LEAST!
AND SEPARATED FROM CONTACT WITH THE EARTH, I CANNOT MAINTAIN THIS ATTACK FOR LONG!
SAM, BREAK FREE -- PERHAPS AS *CANNONBALL*--?!
IN VAIN, YOU HOPE, MAN-CHILD. LAUGH I WILL AT HIS POWER, AS AT YOURS I DO.
BEHOLD!
THE FOURTH BLOODSTONE--
--FORMED OF THE GUARDIAN'S ESSENCE.
SHE'S YOUR *BEST FRIEND,* ILLYANA! HOW CAN YOU STAND BY AND WATCH HER BEING SLAUGHTERED?!
THE BEYONDER--
-- A GREATER GOOD--!
ARE YOU SAYING KITTY ISN'T IMPORTANT--
--THAT SHE *DOESN'T MATTER?!!*


IS THIS THE PRICE THE BEYONDER DEMANDS FOR YOUR DEVOTION-- AN INNOCENT GIRL'S *SOUL?!*
KITTY'D DO *ANYTHING* FOR YOU-- MAKE ANY SACRIFICE, WITHOUT HESITATION OR REGRET-- BECAUSE YOU'RE HER *FRIEND!*
WHY CAN'T YOU DO THE SAME?!
SHE'S THERE IN MY PLACE!
WHEN I WAS CLEANSED-- MY MAGICKS, AND THE RESPONSIBILITY THAT GO WITH THEM--
--MUST HAVE TRANSFERRED TO KITTY.
TO SAVE HER, I'VE GOT TO TAKE THEM BACK.
BECOME *EVIL.*
IF I LET HER DIE, THOUGH, HOW CAN I CALL MYSELF "GOOD?"
IT ISN'T FAIR!
BUT DANI'S RIGHT-- SHE'S MY FRIEND!
KITTY!!!


IF I'M IN TIME, THE BLOODSTONE ESSENCE WILL RETURN TO KITTY, AND MAKE HER WHOLE AGAIN!
IF NOT--!
AH'M *LOOSE!*
THANKS, ILLYANA!
SAM SOUNDS HAPPY.
ME, I WANT TO CRY.
I TOOK BACK MY EVIL SELF OF MY OWN FREE WILL. I'LL NEVER BE RID OF IT.
CANNONBALL--GIMME A LIFT!
WOW!
ILLYANA--YOU *KILL* THIS CRITTER?!
I WISH.
I DISRUPTED HIM--MADE IT IMPOSSIBLE FOR THE DEMON TO STAY ON EARTH--AND THE MOMENT HE'S HOME IN HIS OWN SLIMY DIMENSION, I'LL SLAM AND LOCK THE GATEWAY BEHIND HIM!
WE WIN, SAM. THE WORLD IS SAVED.
HOORAY FOR US.


KOFF GRAUGH KOFF!
WHAT A STENCH!
PHEW-- THIS MAKES NIGHTCRAWLER'S TELEPORT STINK SMELL LIKE PERFUME!
KITTY--?!!
HOW IS SHE?
FINE. SHE'S FINE--
--oh, PLEASE, KITTY, BE FINE! DON'T HATE ME FOR WHAT HAPPENED-- I NEVER REALIZED YOU'D BE CAST AS A GUARDIAN.
I'D NEVER HURT YOU.
YAH-- WHAT SHE SAID...
I'M FINE.
KITTY--!
HEY, WHY SO GLUM, ROOMIE?
YOU DID REAL GOOD.
ME, I WASN'T WORRIED.
I KNEW YOU'D SAVE THE DAY.

NEXT the BEYONDER'S VENGEANCE-- "IF I SHOULD DIE..."

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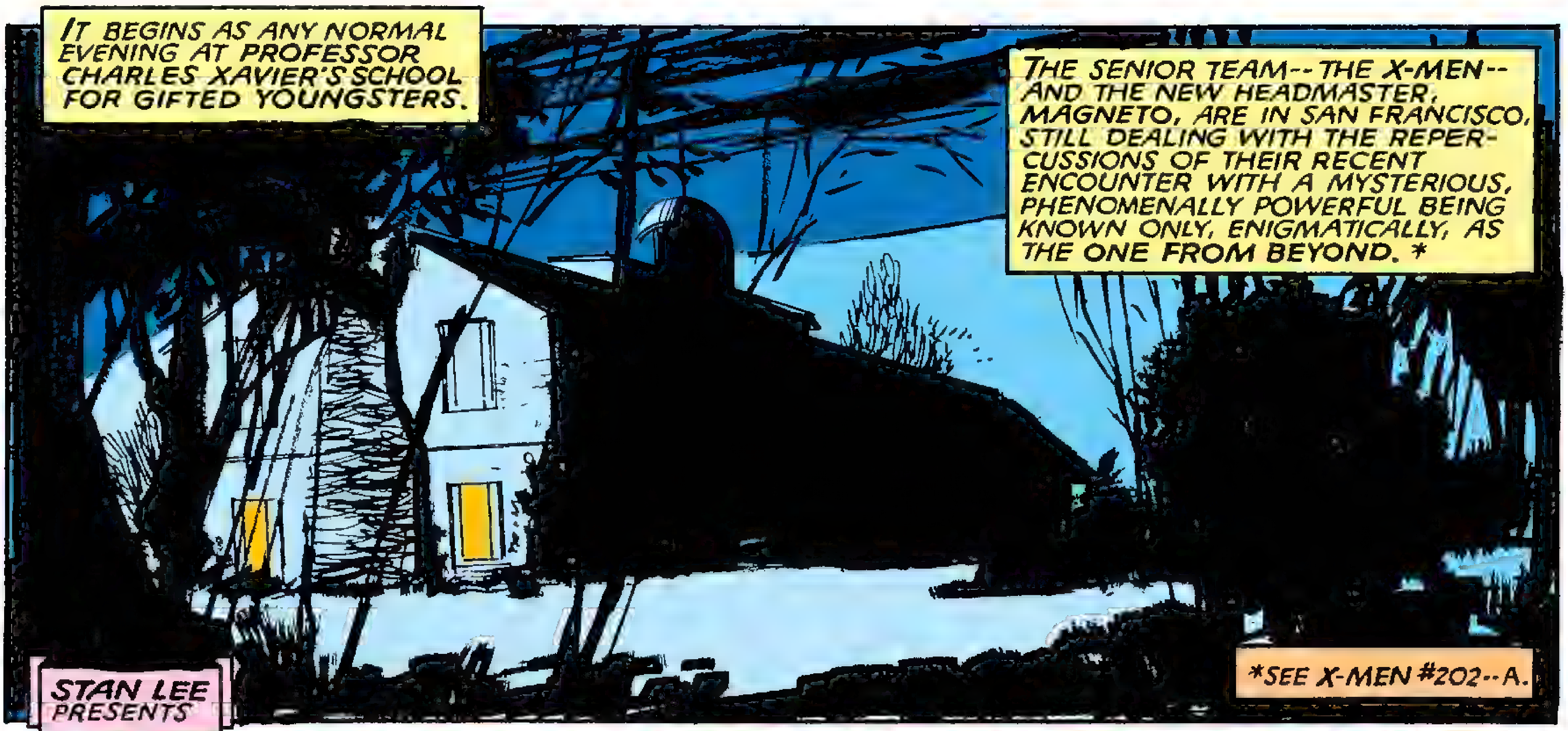
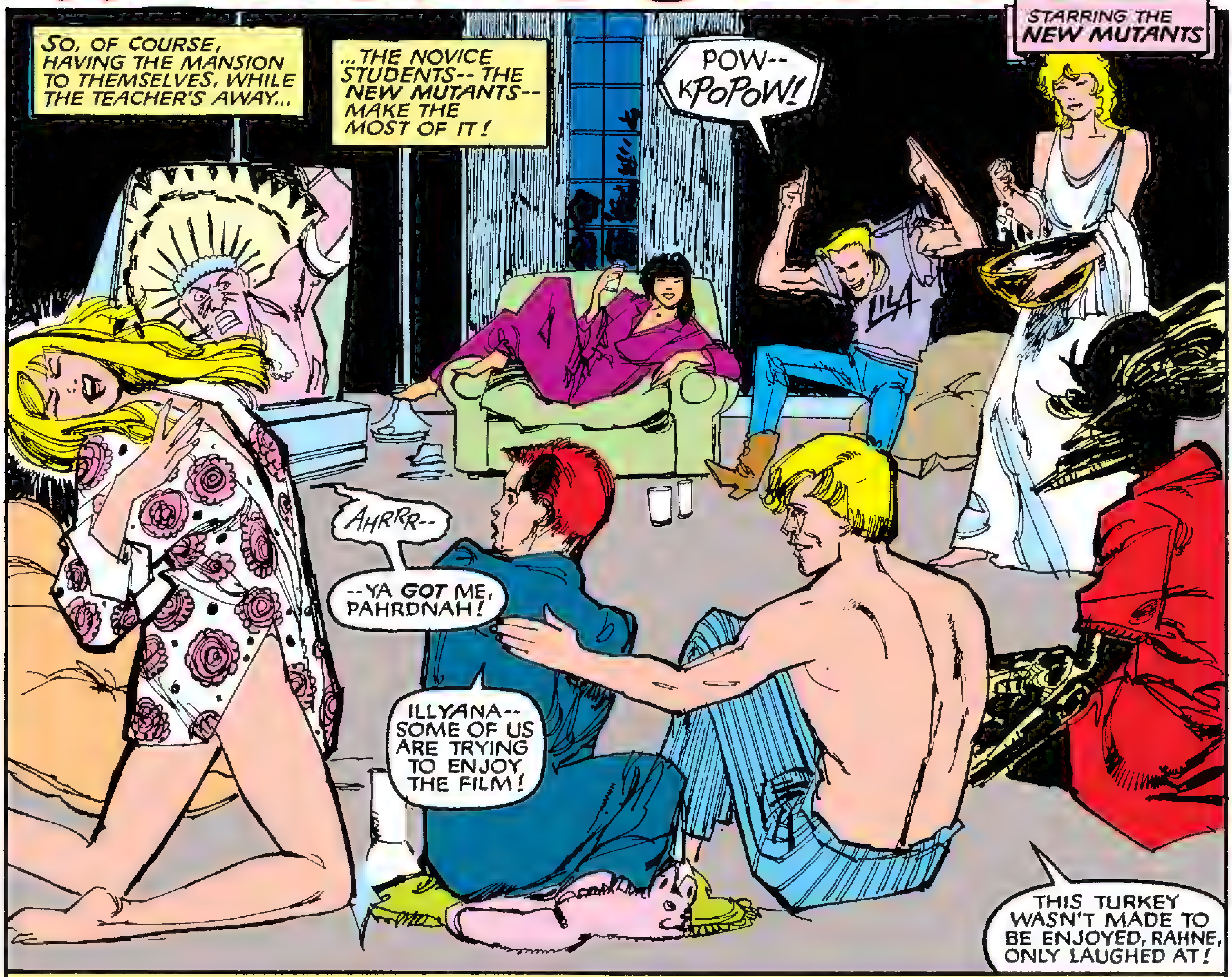
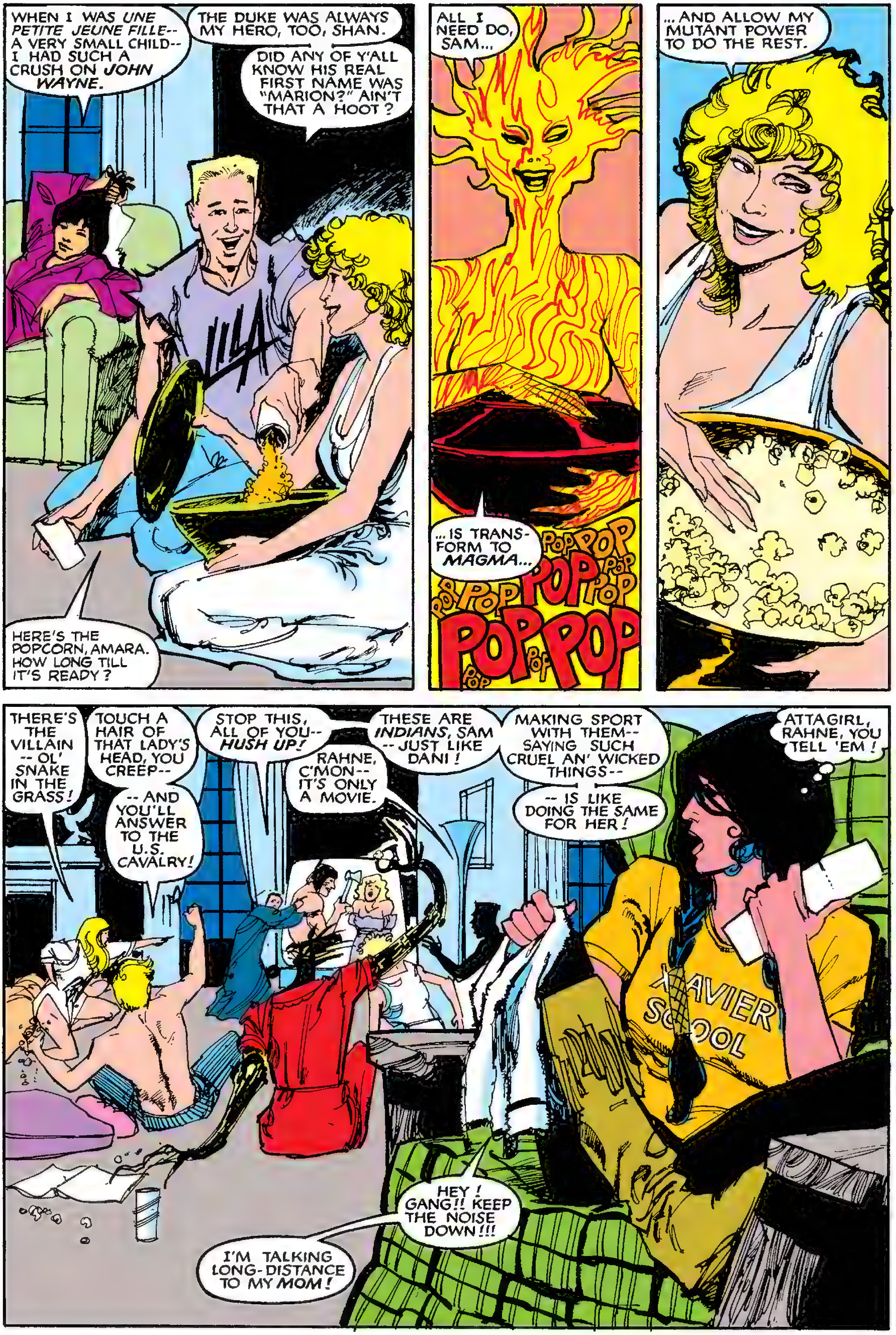
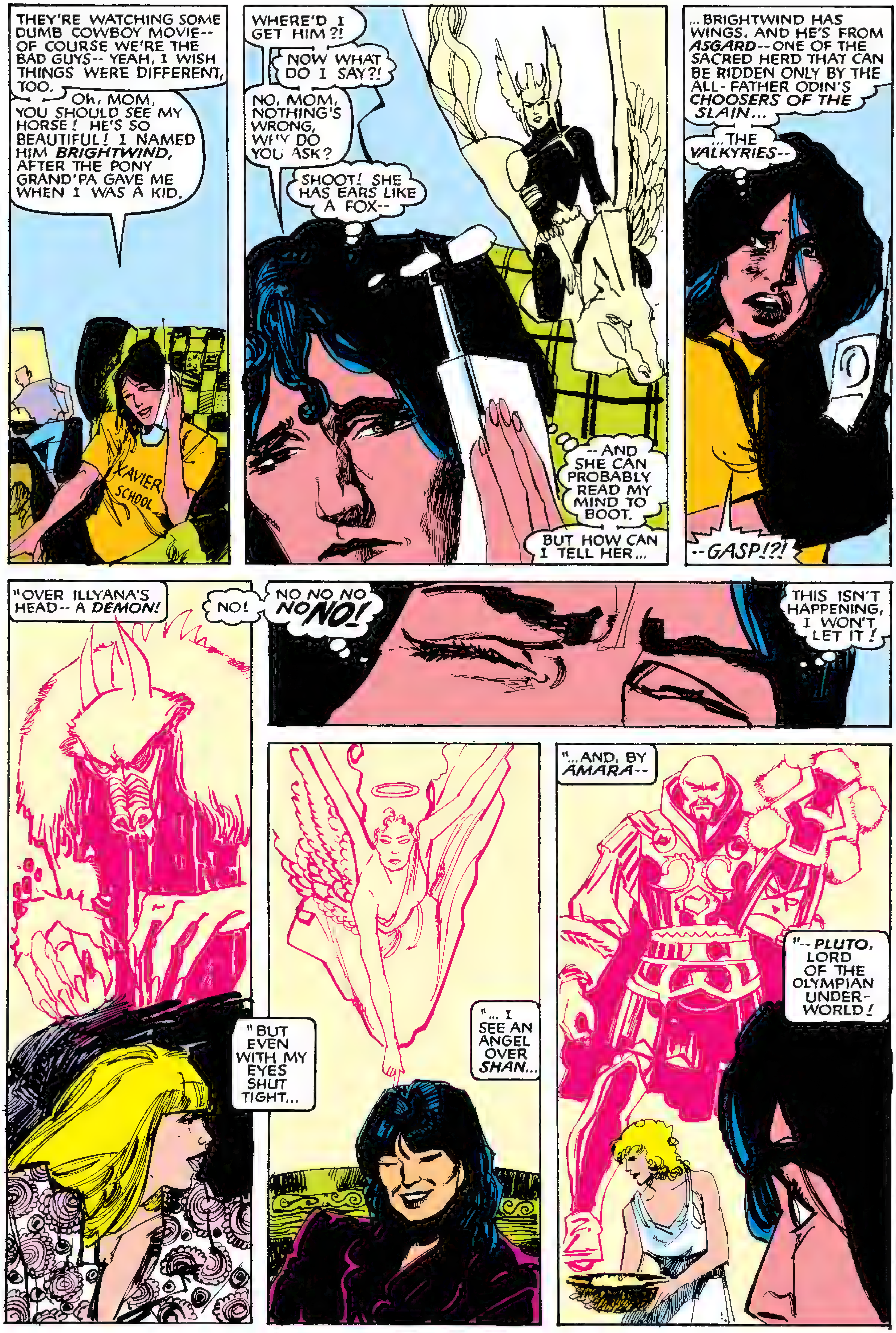

IT BEGINS AS ANY NORMAL EVENING AT PROFESSOR CHARLES XAVIER'S SCHOOL FOR GIFTED YOUNGSTERS.
THE SENIOR TEAM-- THE X-MEN-- AND THE NEW HEADMASTER, MAGNETO, ARE IN SAN FRANCISCO, STILL DEALING WITH THE REPERCUSSIONS OF THEIR RECENT ENCOUNTER WITH A MYSTERIOUS, PHENOMENALLY POWERFUL BEING KNOWN ONLY, ENIGMATICALLY, AS THE ONE FROM BEYOND. *
*SEE X-MEN #202--A.
STAN LEE PRESENTS

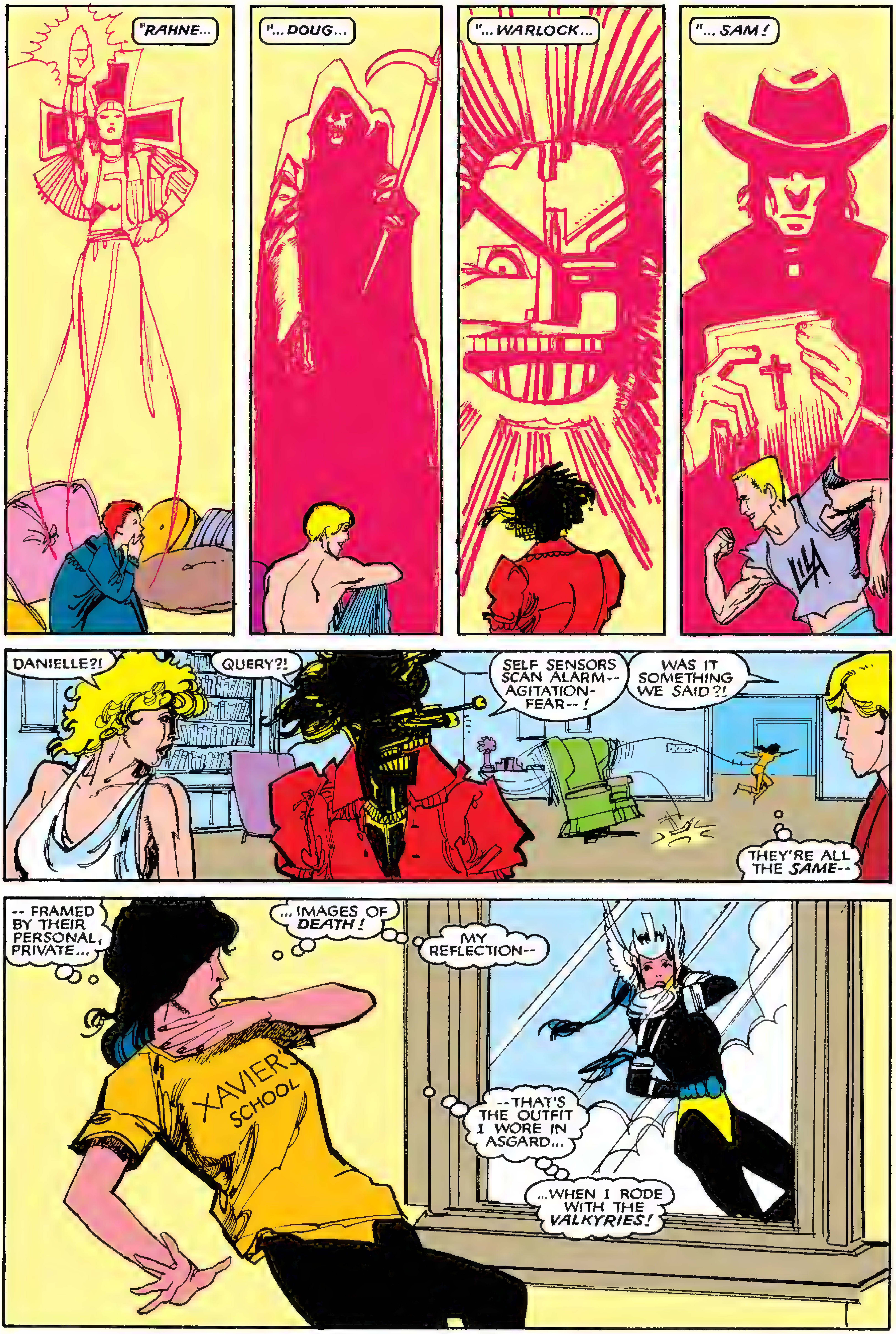
IF I SHOULD DIE

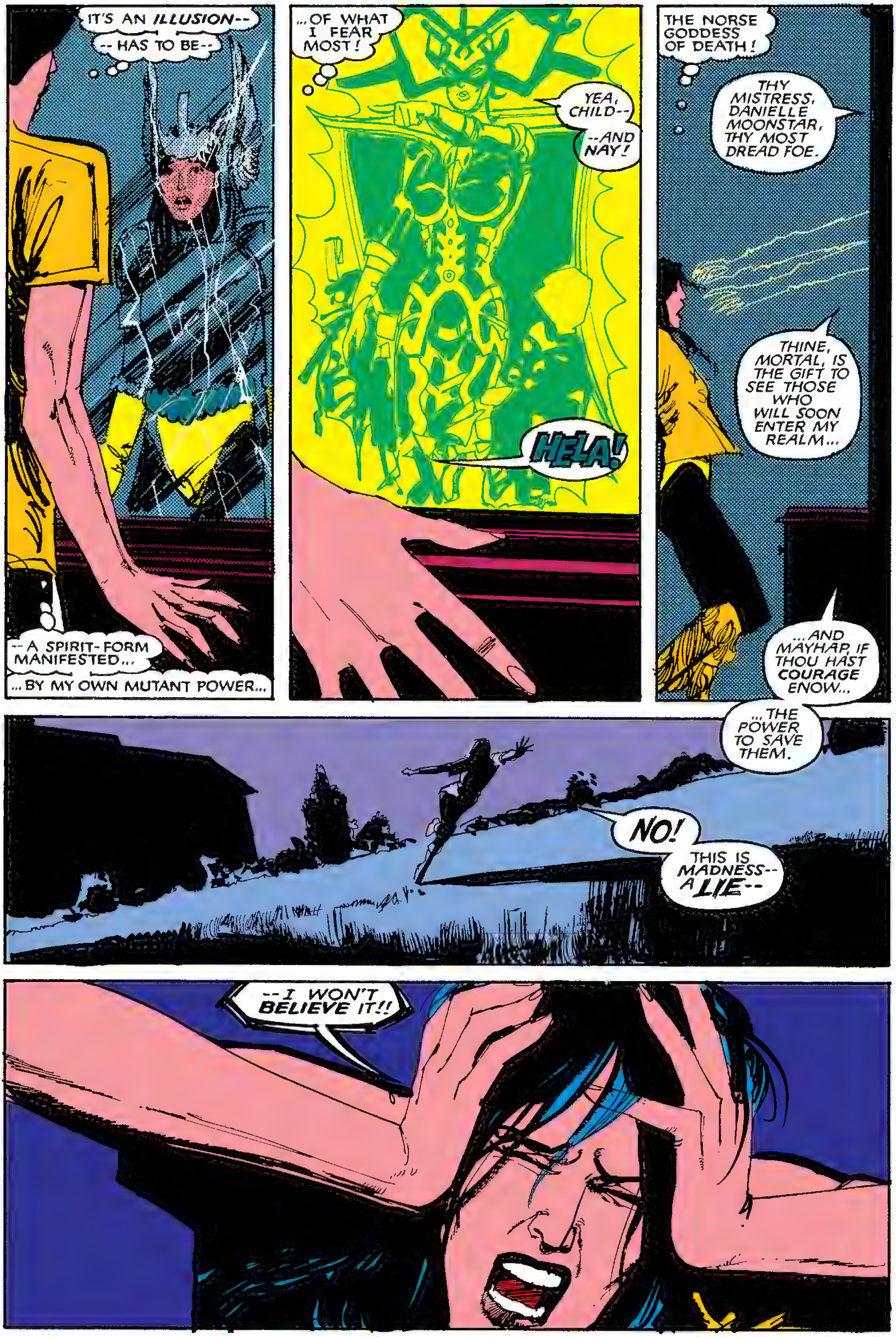

SO, OF COURSE, HAVING THE MANSION TO THEMSELVES, WHILE THE TEACHER'S AWAY...
...THE NOVICE STUDENTS-- THE NEW MUTANTS-- MAKE THE MOST OF IT!
POW-- KPOPOW!
STARRING THE NEW MUTANTS
AHRRR--
--YA GOT ME, PAHRDNAH!
ILLYANA-- SOME OF US ARE TRYING TO ENJOY THE FILM!
THIS TURKEY WASN'T MADE TO BE ENJOYED, RAHNE, ONLY LAUGHED AT!

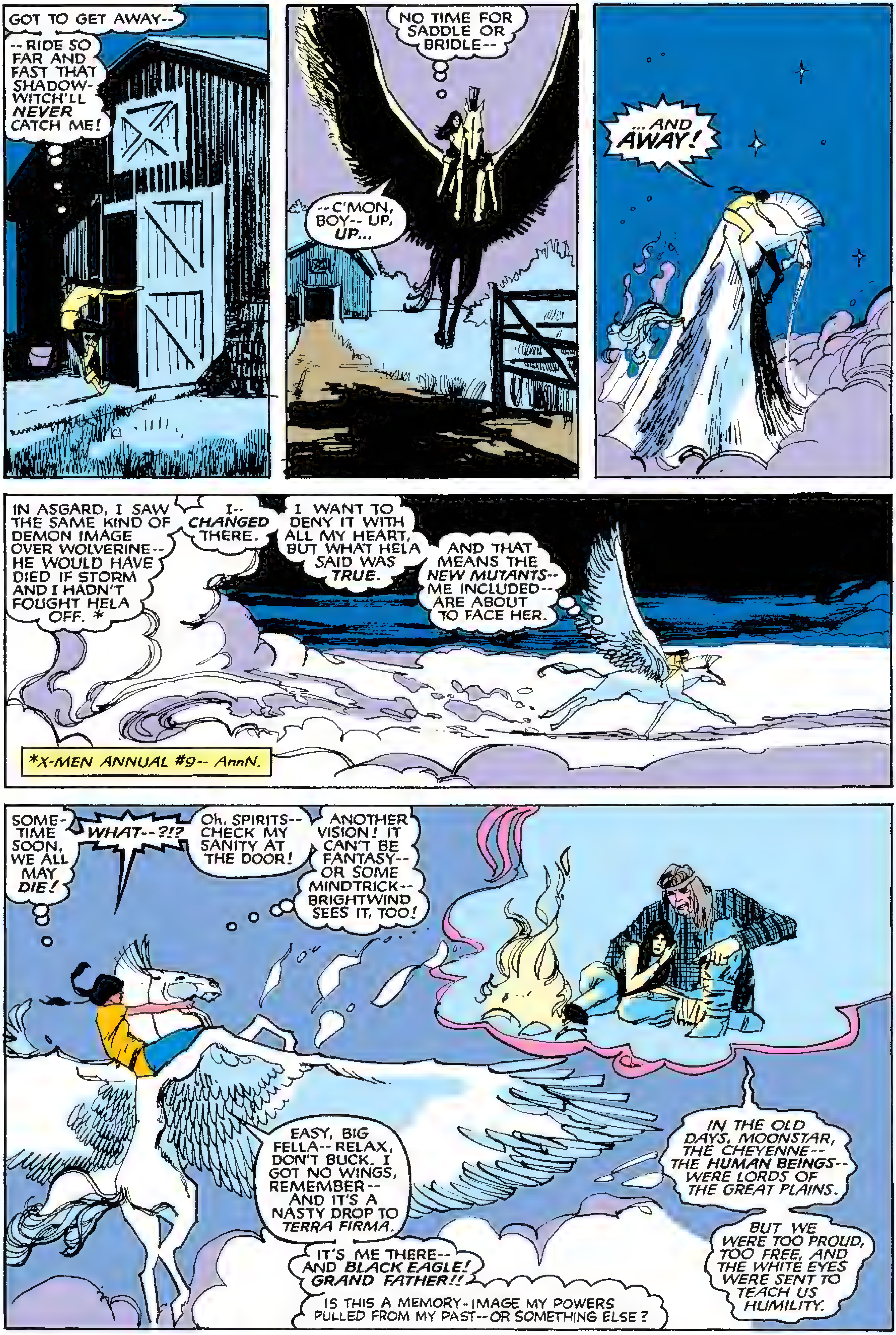
CHRIS CLAREMONT, *WRITER* **MARY WILSHIRE & BILL SIENKIEWICZ**, *ARTISTS*
ORZECHOWSKI & BUHALIS, *LETTERERS* • GLYNIS OLIVER, *COLORIST* • ANN NOCENTI, *EDITOR* • JIM SHOOTER, *EDITOR IN CHIEF*

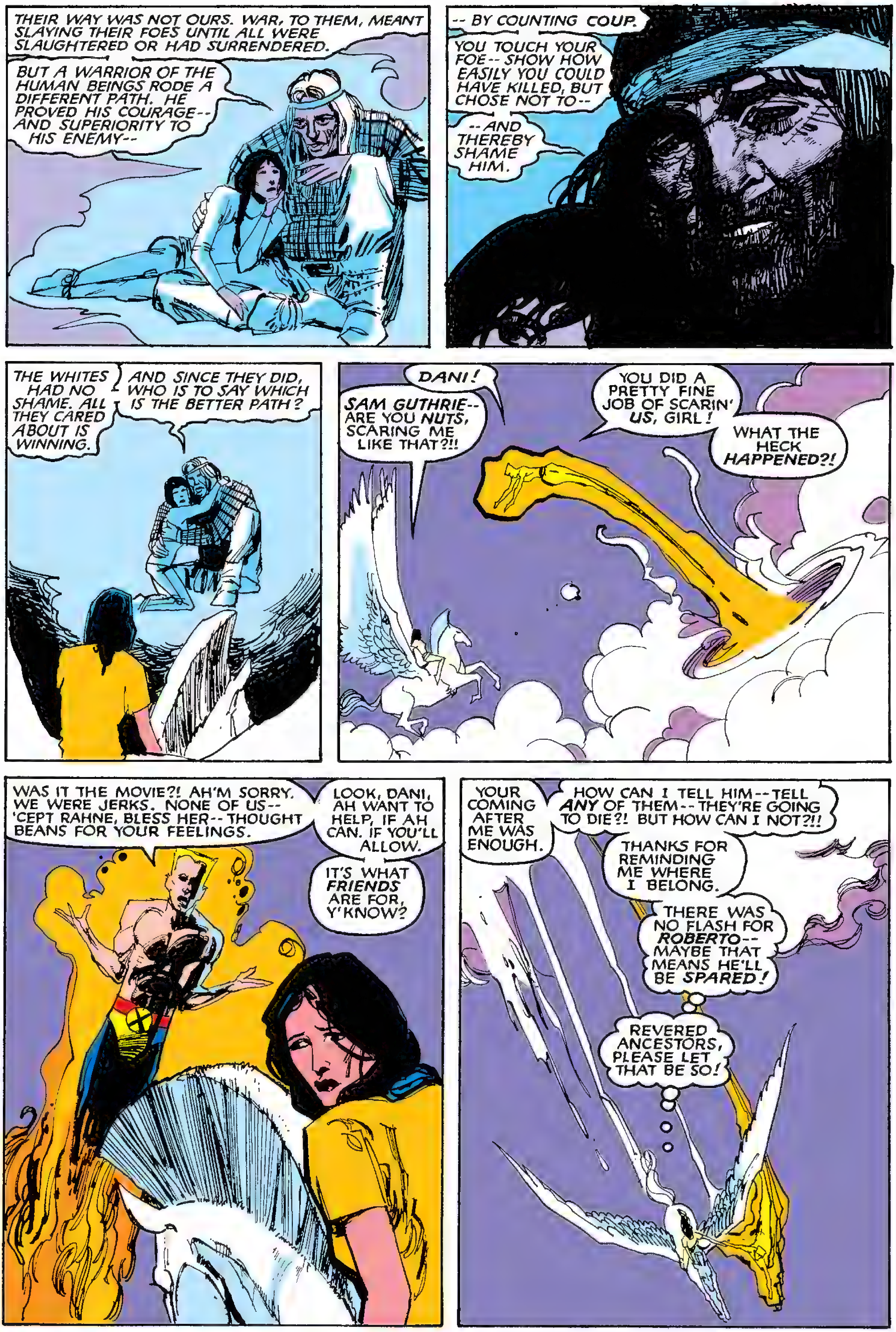

WHEN I WAS *UNE PETITE JEUNE FILLE*-- A VERY SMALL CHILD-- I HAD SUCH A CRUSH ON *JOHN WAYNE*.
THE DUKE WAS ALWAYS MY HERO, TOO, SHAN.
DID ANY OF Y'ALL KNOW HIS REAL FIRST NAME WAS "MARION?" AIN'T THAT A HOOT?
HERE'S THE POPCORN, AMARA. HOW LONG TILL IT'S READY?
ALL I NEED DO, SAM...
...IS TRANSFORM TO *MAGMA*...
POP POP POP POP POP POP POP POP POP POP POP POP
...AND ALLOW MY MUTANT POWER TO DO THE REST.
THERE'S THE VILLAIN -- OL' SNAKE IN THE GRASS!
TOUCH A HAIR OF THAT LADY'S HEAD, YOU CREEP--
-- AND YOU'LL ANSWER TO THE U.S. CAVALRY!
STOP THIS, ALL OF YOU-- *HUSH UP!*
RAHNE, C'MON-- IT'S ONLY A MOVIE.
THESE ARE *INDIANS*, SAM -- JUST LIKE DANI!
MAKING SPORT WITH THEM-- SAYING SUCH CRUEL AN' WICKED THINGS--
-- IS LIKE DOING THE *SAME* FOR HER!
ATTAGIRL, RAHNE, YOU TELL 'EM!
XAVIER SCHOOL
HEY! GANG!! KEEP THE NOISE DOWN!!!
I'M TALKING LONG-DISTANCE TO MY *MOM*!

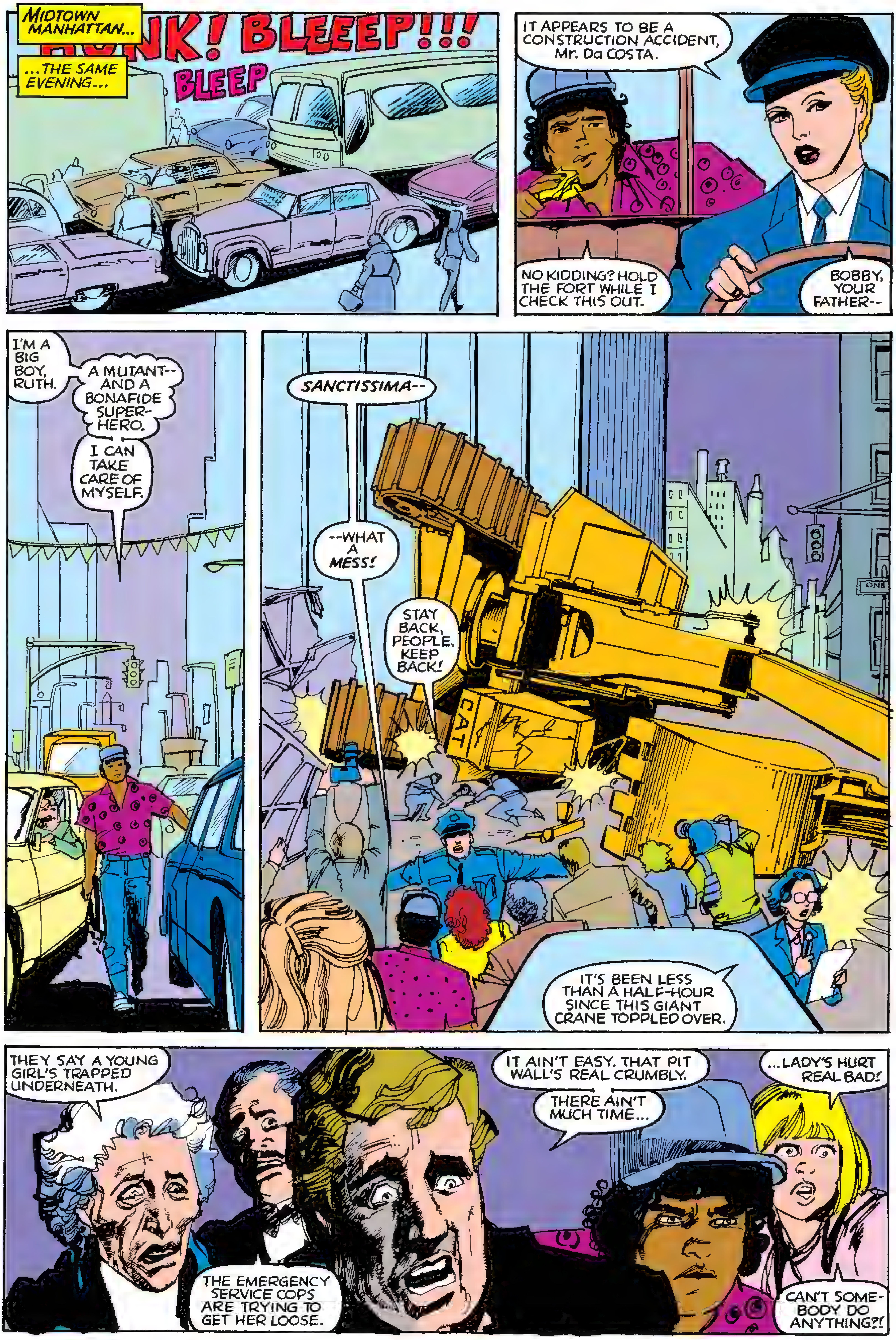

THEY'RE WATCHING SOME DUMB COWBOY MOVIE-- OF COURSE WE'RE THE BAD GUYS-- YEAH, I WISH THINGS WERE DIFFERENT, TOO.
OH, MOM, YOU SHOULD SEE MY HORSE! HE'S SO BEAUTIFUL! I NAMED HIM *BRIGHTWIND,* AFTER THE PONY GRAND'PA GAVE ME WHEN I WAS A KID.
XAVIER SCHOOL
WHERE'D I GET HIM?!
NOW WHAT DO I SAY?!
NO, MOM, NOTHING'S WRONG, WHY DO YOU ASK?
SHOOT! SHE HAS EARS LIKE A FOX--
--AND SHE CAN PROBABLY READ MY MIND TO BOOT.
BUT HOW CAN I TELL HER...
...BRIGHTWIND HAS WINGS, AND HE'S FROM *ASGARD*-- ONE OF THE SACRED HERD THAT CAN BE RIDDEN ONLY BY THE ALL-FATHER ODIN'S *CHOOSERS OF THE SLAIN*...
...THE *VALKYRIES*--
--*GASP!?!*
"OVER ILLYANA'S HEAD-- A *DEMON!*
NO!
NO NO NO NO *NO!*
THIS ISN'T HAPPENING, I WON'T LET IT!
"BUT EVEN WITH MY EYES SHUT TIGHT...
"...I SEE AN ANGEL OVER *SHAN*...
"...AND, BY *AMARA*--
"--*PLUTO,* LORD OF THE OLYMPIAN UNDER-WORLD!

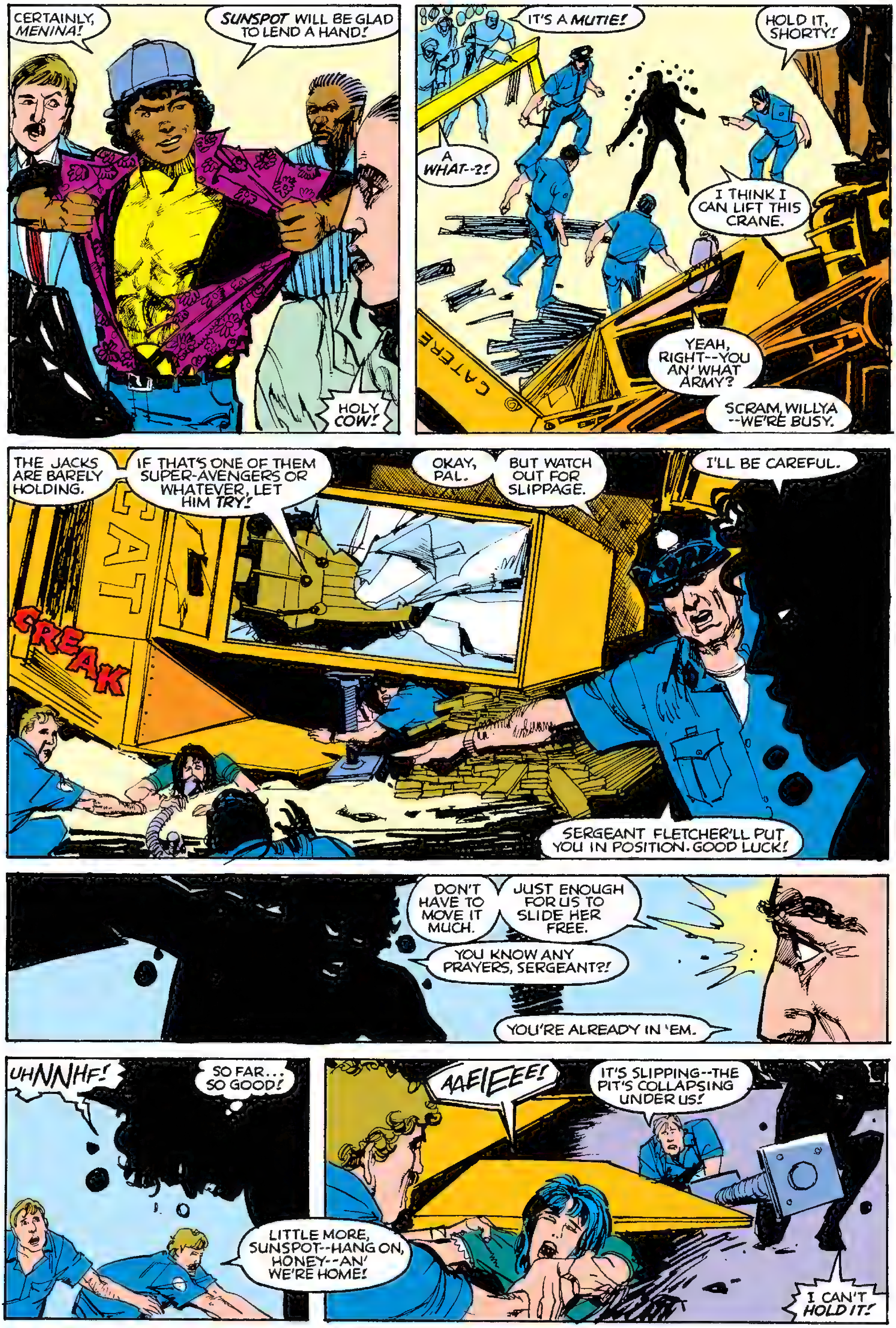

"RAHNE...
"... DOUG...
"... WARLOCK...
"... SAM!
DANIELLE?!
QUERY?!
SELF SENSORS SCAN ALARM-- AGITATION-FEAR--!
WAS IT SOMETHING WE SAID?!
THEY'RE ALL THE *SAME*--
-- FRAMED BY THEIR PERSONAL, PRIVATE...
...IMAGES OF *DEATH!*
MY REFLECTION--
XAVIER'S SCHOOL
--THAT'S THE OUTFIT I WORE IN ASGARD...
...WHEN I RODE WITH THE *VALKYRIES!*

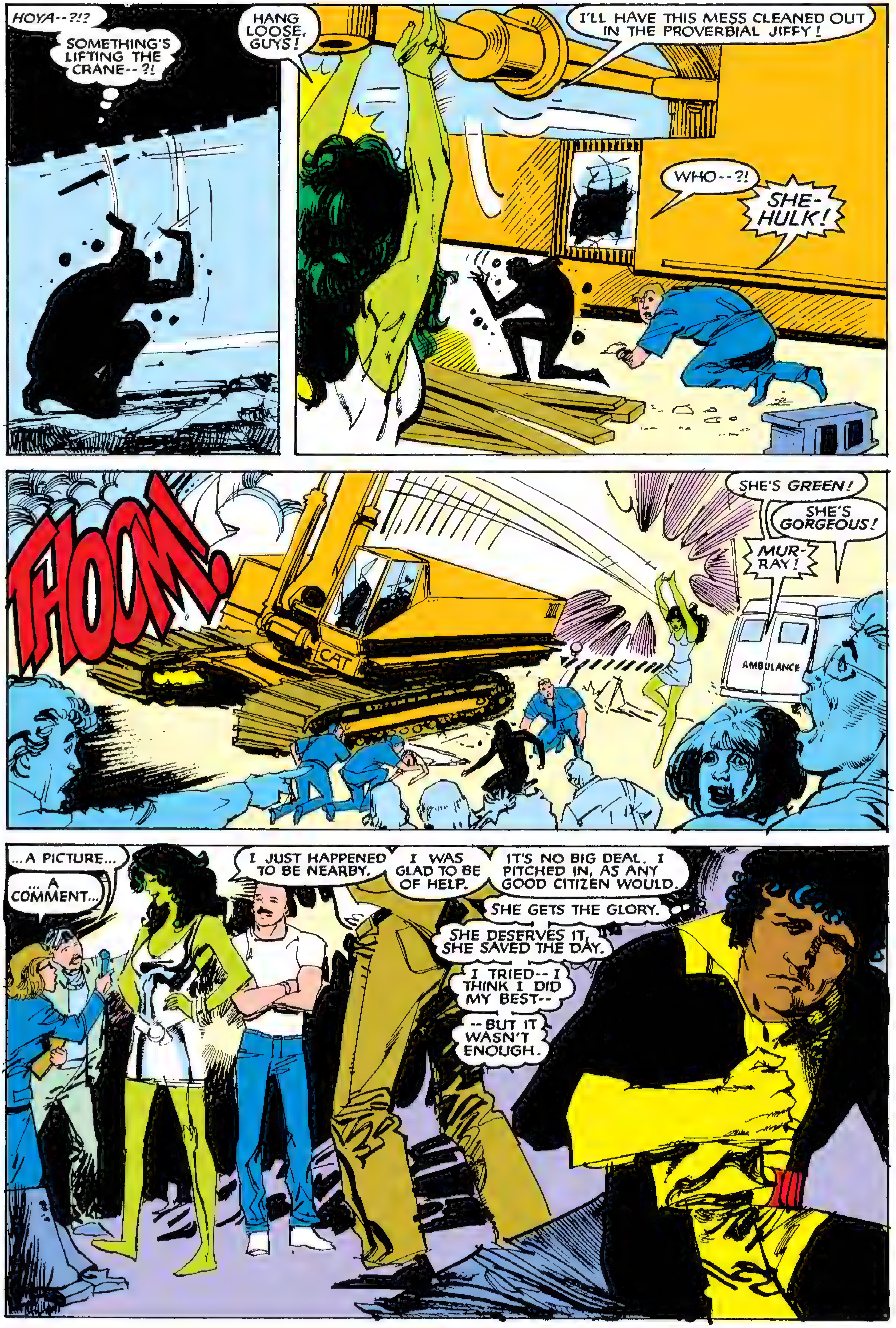

IT'S AN *ILLUSION*--
-- HAS TO BE--
-- A SPIRIT-FORM MANIFESTED...
... BY MY OWN MUTANT POWER...
... OF WHAT I FEAR MOST!
YEA, CHILD--
--AND NAY!
HELA!
THE NORSE GODDESS OF DEATH!
THY MISTRESS, DANIELLE MOONSTAR, THY MOST DREAD FOE.
THINE, MORTAL, IS THE GIFT TO SEE THOSE WHO WILL SOON ENTER MY REALM...
... AND MAYHAP, IF THOU HAST **COURAGE** ENOW...
... THE POWER TO SAVE THEM.
NO!
THIS IS MADNESS-- A *LIE*--
-- I WON'T **BELIEVE** IT!!

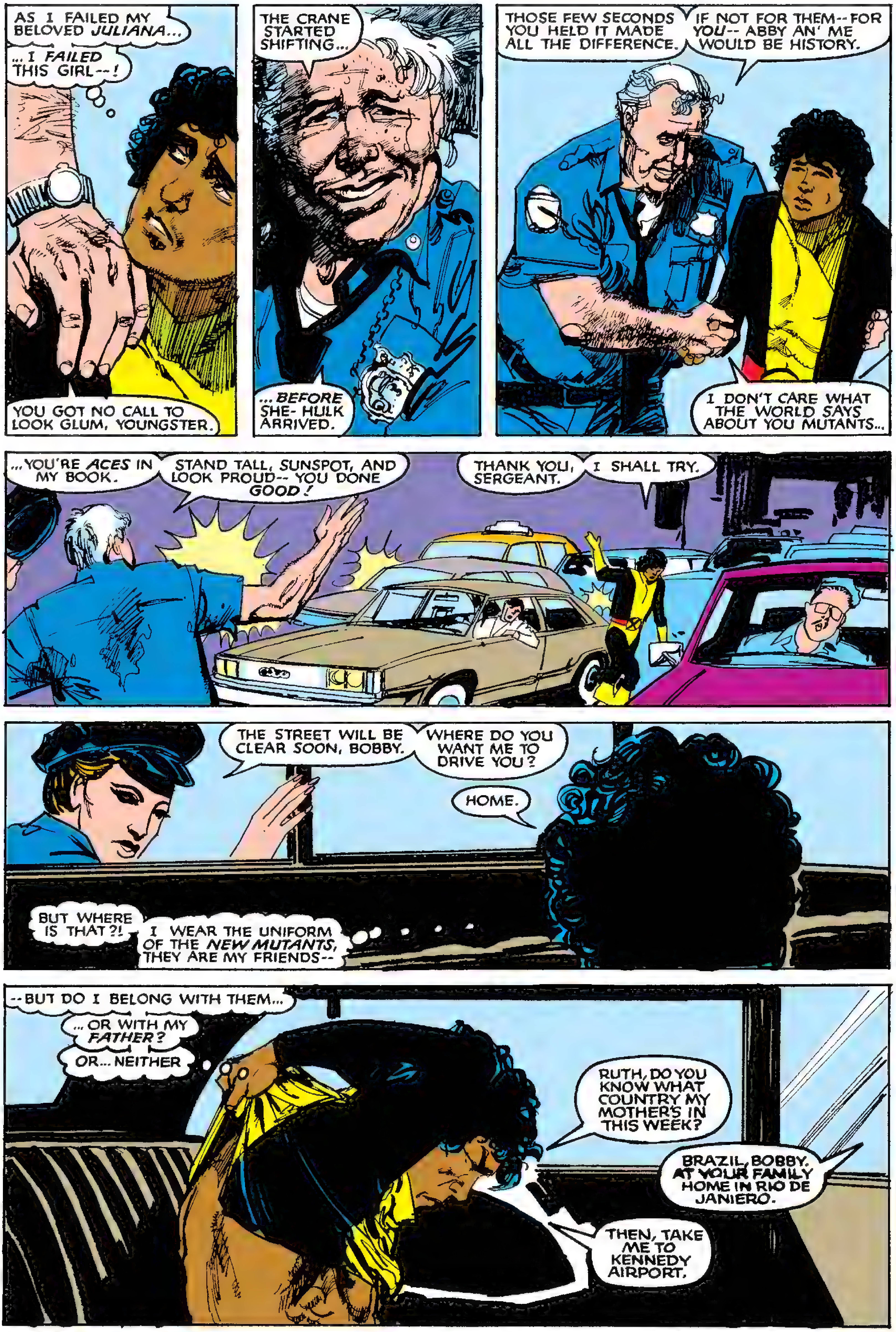

GOT TO GET AWAY--
-- RIDE SO FAR AND FAST THAT SHADOWWITCH'LL **NEVER** CATCH ME!
NO TIME FOR SADDLE OR BRIDLE--
--C'MON, BOY-- UP, ***UP...***
... AND ***AWAY!***
IN ASGARD, I SAW THE SAME KIND OF DEMON IMAGE OVER WOLVERINE-- HE WOULD HAVE DIED IF STORM AND I HADN'T FOUGHT HELA OFF. *
I-- ***CHANGED*** THERE.
I WANT TO DENY IT WITH ALL MY HEART, BUT WHAT HELA SAID WAS ***TRUE.***
AND THAT MEANS THE ***NEW MUTANTS***-- ME INCLUDED-- ARE ABOUT TO FACE HER.
***X-MEN ANNUAL #9-- AnnN.**
SOMETIME SOON, WE ALL MAY ***DIE!***
WHAT--?!?
Oh, SPIRITS-- CHECK MY SANITY AT THE DOOR!
ANOTHER VISION! IT CAN'T BE FANTASY-- OR SOME MINDTRICK-- BRIGHTWIND SEES IT, TOO!
EASY, BIG FELLA-- RELAX, DON'T BUCK. I GOT NO WINGS, REMEMBER-- AND IT'S A NASTY DROP TO *TERRA FIRMA.*
IT'S ME THERE-- AND ***BLACK EAGLE! GRAND FATHER!!***
IS THIS A MEMORY-IMAGE MY POWERS PULLED FROM MY PAST--OR SOMETHING ELSE?
*IN THE OLD DAYS, MOONSTAR, THE CHEYENNE-- THE **HUMAN BEINGS**-- WERE LORDS OF THE GREAT PLAINS.*
BUT WE WERE TOO PROUD, TOO FREE, AND THE WHITE EYES WERE SENT TO TEACH US HUMILITY.

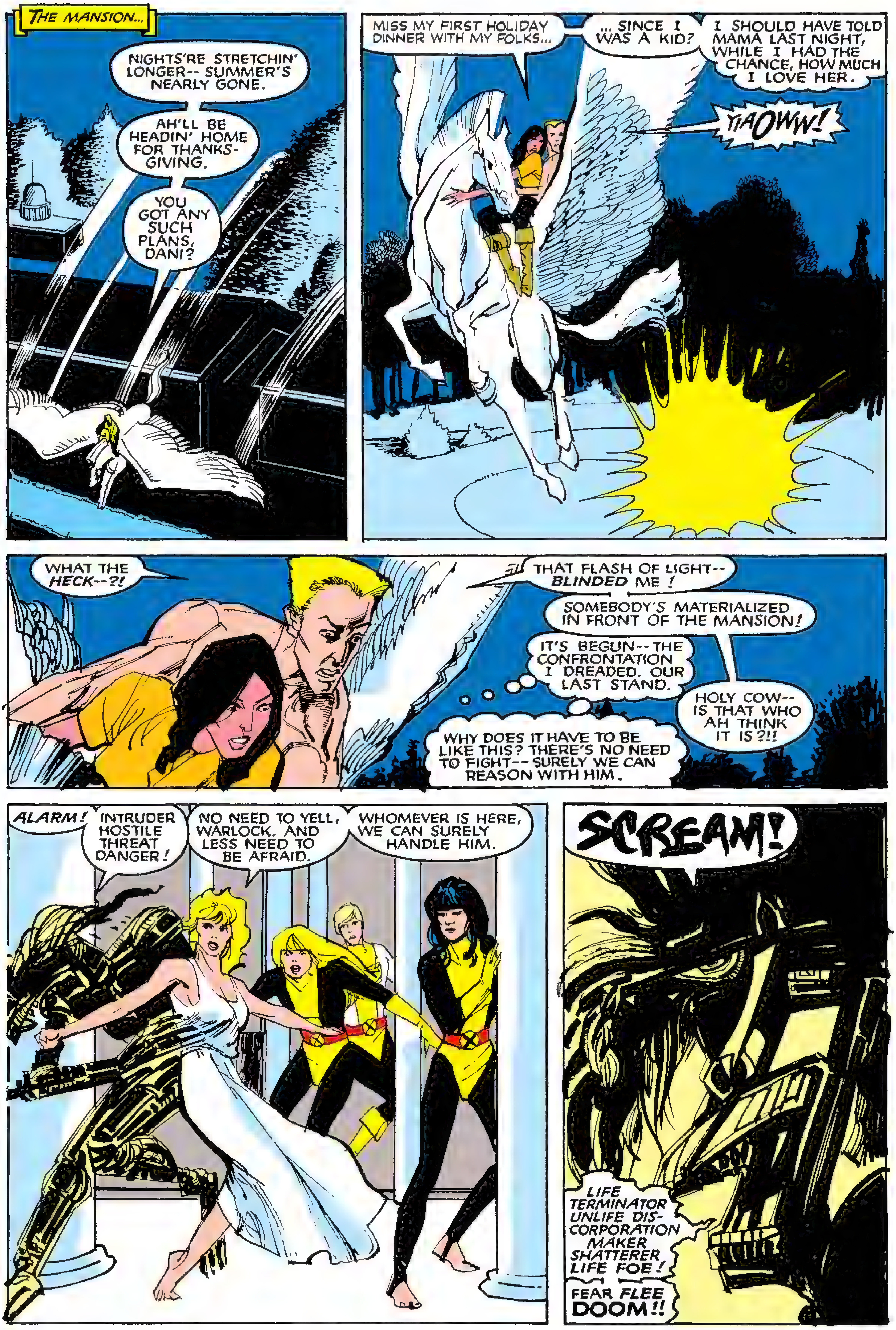

THEIR WAY WAS NOT OURS. WAR, TO THEM, MEANT SLAYING THEIR FOES UNTIL ALL WERE SLAUGHTERED OR HAD SURRENDERED.
BUT A WARRIOR OF THE HUMAN BEINGS RODE A DIFFERENT PATH. HE PROVED HIS COURAGE--AND SUPERIORITY TO HIS ENEMY--
-- BY COUNTING COUP.
YOU TOUCH YOUR FOE--SHOW HOW EASILY YOU COULD HAVE KILLED, BUT CHOSE NOT TO--
--AND THEREBY SHAME HIM.
THE WHITES HAD NO SHAME. ALL THEY CARED ABOUT IS WINNING.
AND SINCE THEY DID, WHO IS TO SAY WHICH IS THE BETTER PATH?
DANI!
SAM GUTHRIE--ARE YOU NUTS, SCARING ME LIKE THAT?!!
YOU DID A PRETTY FINE JOB OF SCARIN' US, GIRL!
WHAT THE HECK HAPPENED?!
WAS IT THE MOVIE?! AH'M SORRY. WE WERE JERKS. NONE OF US--'CEPT RAHNE, BLESS HER--THOUGHT BEANS FOR YOUR FEELINGS.
LOOK, DANI, AH WANT TO HELP, IF AH CAN. IF YOU'LL ALLOW.
IT'S WHAT FRIENDS ARE FOR, Y'KNOW?
YOUR COMING AFTER ME WAS ENOUGH.
HOW CAN I TELL HIM--TELL ANY OF THEM--THEY'RE GOING TO DIE?! BUT HOW CAN I NOT?!!
THANKS FOR REMINDING ME WHERE I BELONG.
THERE WAS NO FLASH FOR ROBERTO--MAYBE THAT MEANS HE'LL BE SPARED!
REVERED ANCESTORS, PLEASE LET THAT BE SO!

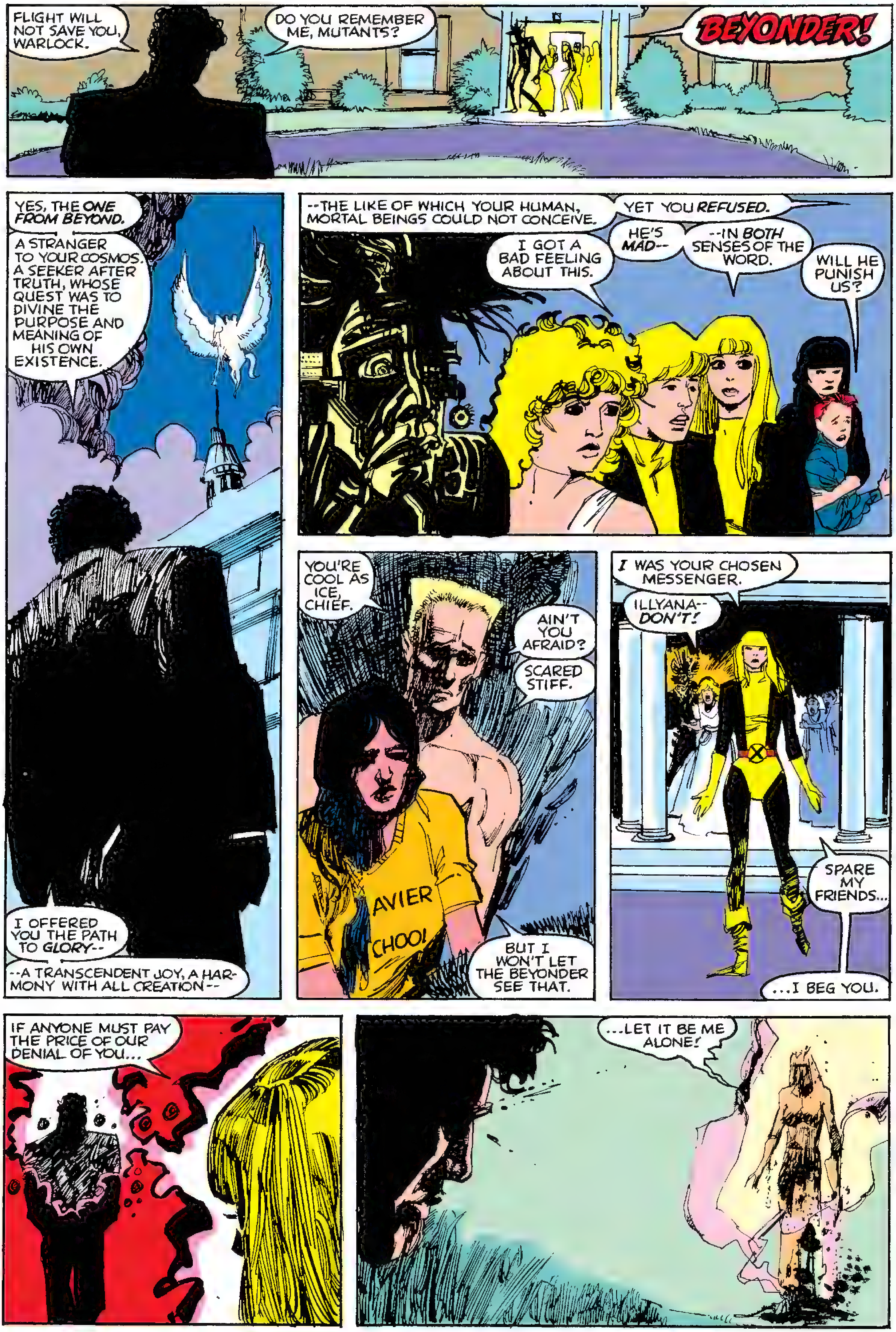

MIDTOWN MANHATTAN...
...THE SAME EVENING...
NK! BLEEEP!!!
BLEEP
100
IT APPEARS TO BE A CONSTRUCTION ACCIDENT, Mr. Da COSTA.
NO KIDDING? HOLD THE FORT WHILE I CHECK THIS OUT.
BOBBY, YOUR FATHER--
I'M A BIG BOY, RUTH.
A MUTANT-- AND A BONAFIDE SUPER-HERO.
I CAN TAKE CARE OF MYSELF.
SANCTISSIMA--
--WHAT A MESS!
STAY BACK, PEOPLE, KEEP BACK!
CAT
ONE
IT'S BEEN LESS THAN A HALF-HOUR SINCE THIS GIANT CRANE TOPPLED OVER.
THEY SAY A YOUNG GIRL'S TRAPPED UNDERNEATH.
THE EMERGENCY SERVICE COPS ARE TRYING TO GET HER LOOSE.
IT AIN'T EASY. THAT PIT WALL'S REAL CRUMBLY.
THERE AIN'T MUCH TIME...
...LADY'S HURT REAL BAD!
CAN'T SOMEBODY DO ANYTHING?!

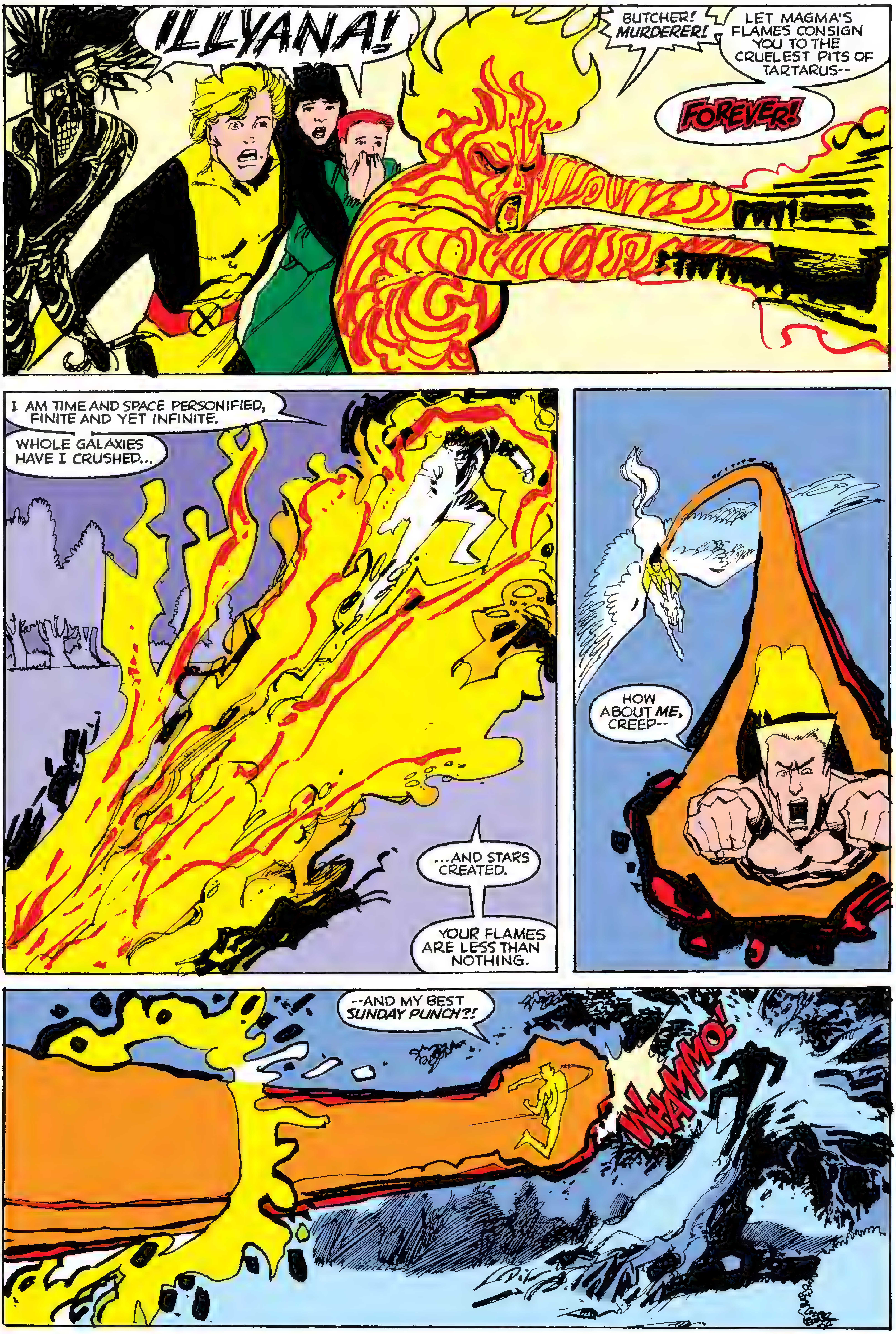

CERTAINLY, *MENINA!*
SUNSPOT WILL BE GLAD TO LEND A HAND!
HOLY *COW!*
IT'S A *MUTIE!*
A *WHAT--?!*
HOLD IT, SHORTY!
I THINK I CAN LIFT THIS CRANE.
YEAH, RIGHT--YOU AN' WHAT ARMY?
SCRAM, WILLYA --WE'RE BUSY.
THE JACKS ARE BARELY HOLDING.
IF THAT'S ONE OF THEM SUPER-AVENGERS OR WHATEVER, LET HIM *TRY!*
OKAY, PAL.
BUT WATCH OUT FOR SLIPPAGE.
I'LL BE CAREFUL.
CREAK
SERGEANT FLETCHER'LL PUT YOU IN POSITION. GOOD LUCK!
DON'T HAVE TO MOVE IT MUCH.
JUST ENOUGH FOR US TO SLIDE HER FREE.
YOU KNOW ANY PRAYERS, SERGEANT?!
YOU'RE ALREADY IN 'EM.
UHNNHF!
SO FAR... SO GOOD!
LITTLE MORE, SUNSPOT--HANG ON, HONEY--AN' WE'RE HOME!
AAEIEEE!
IT'S SLIPPING--THE PIT'S COLLAPSING UNDER US!
I CAN'T *HOLD IT!*

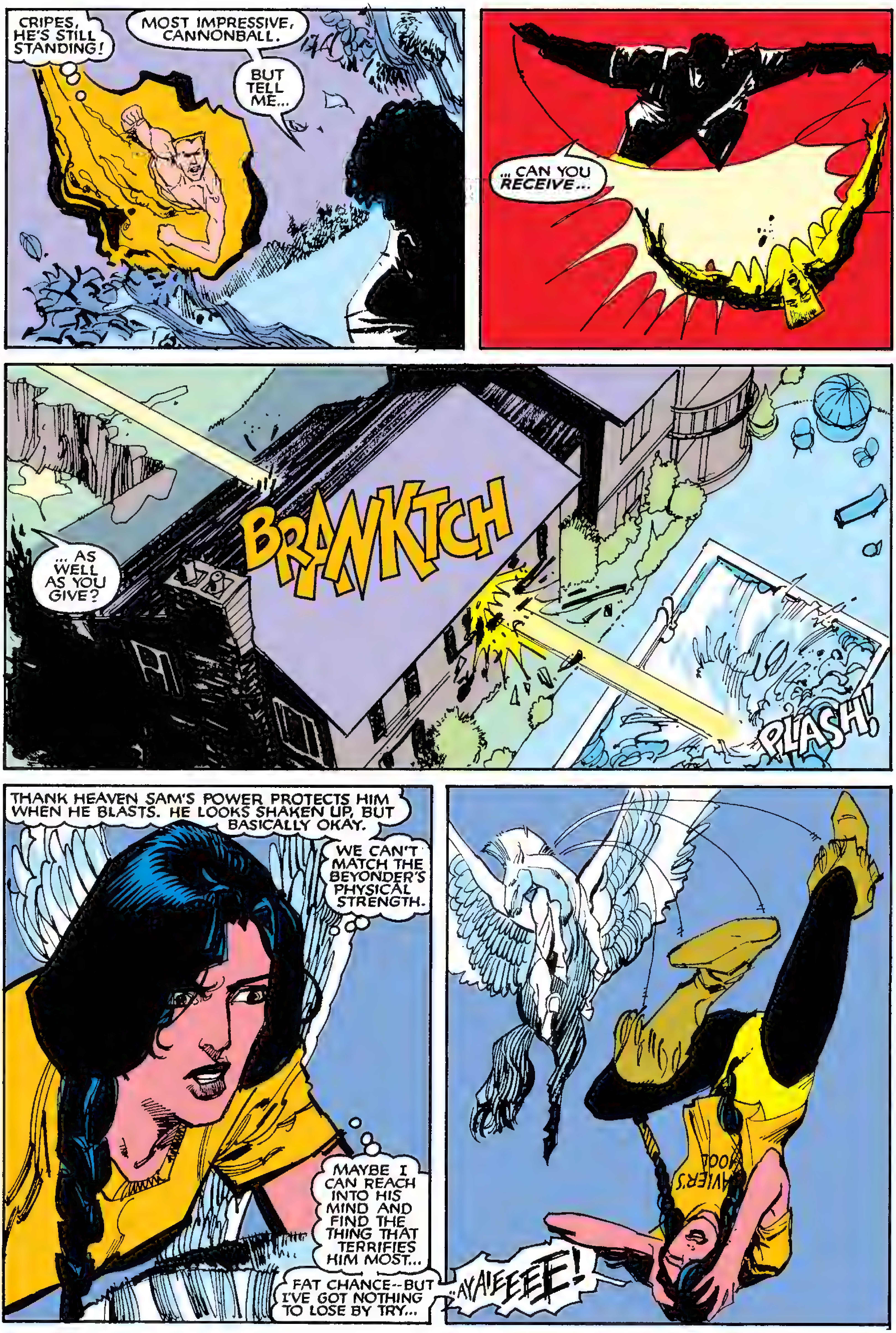

HOYA--?!?
SOMETHING'S LIFTING THE CRANE--?!
HANG LOOSE, GUYS!
I'LL HAVE THIS MESS CLEANED OUT IN THE PROVERBIAL JIFFY!
WHO--?!
SHE-HULK!
THOOM!
CAT
AMBULANCE
SHE'S GREEN!
SHE'S GORGEOUS!
MUR-RAY!
...A PICTURE...
...A COMMENT...
I JUST HAPPENED TO BE NEARBY.
I WAS GLAD TO BE OF HELP.
IT'S NO BIG DEAL. I PITCHED IN, AS ANY GOOD CITIZEN WOULD.
SHE GETS THE GLORY.
SHE DESERVES IT, SHE SAVED THE DAY.
I TRIED-- I THINK I DID MY BEST--
--BUT IT WASN'T ENOUGH.

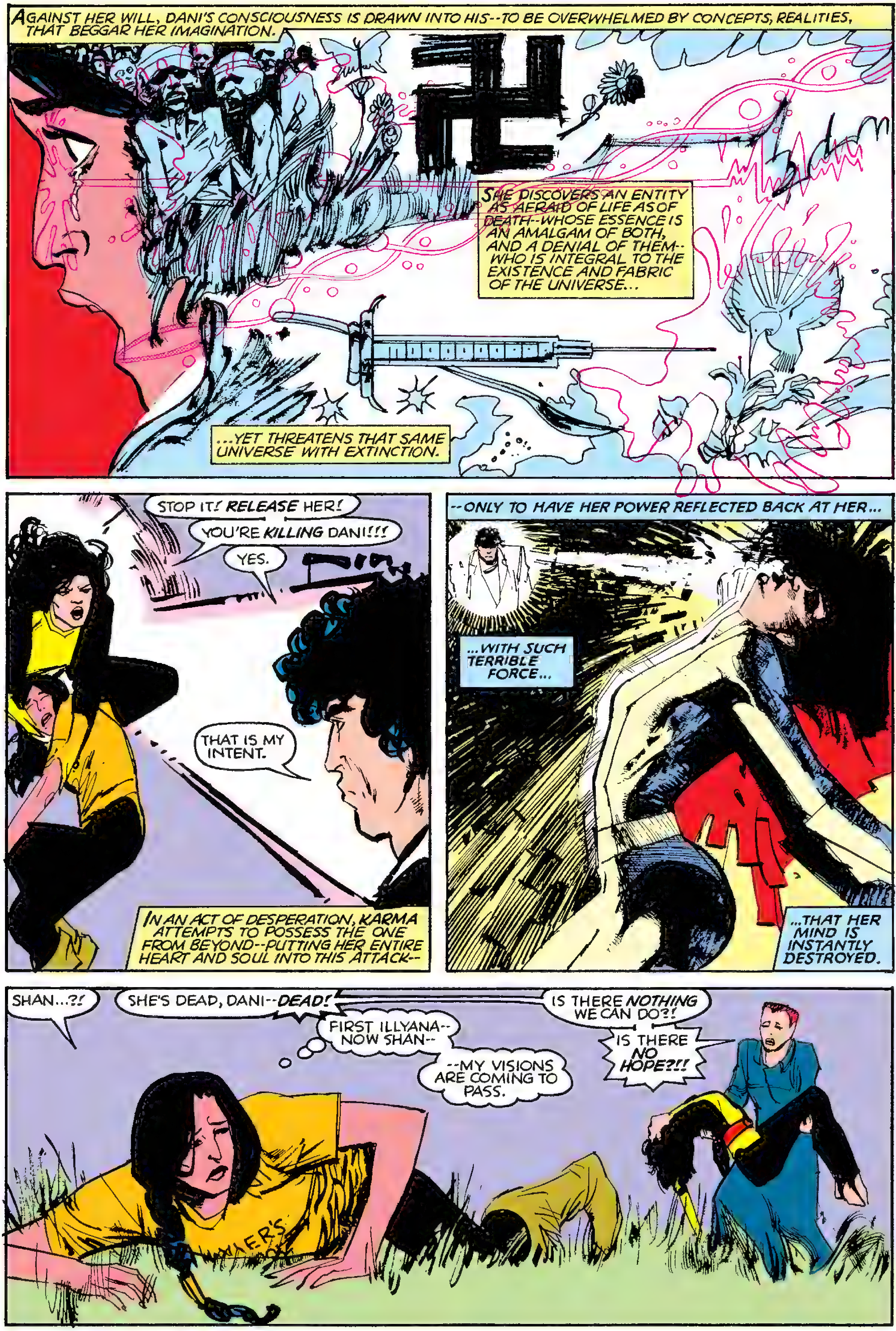

AS I FAILED MY BELOVED *JULIANA*...
...I *FAILED* THIS GIRL--!
YOU GOT NO CALL TO LOOK GLUM, YOUNGSTER.
THE CRANE STARTED SHIFTING...
...*BEFORE* SHE-HULK ARRIVED.
THOSE FEW SECONDS YOU HELD IT MADE ALL THE DIFFERENCE.
IF NOT FOR THEM--FOR *YOU*-- ABBY AN' ME WOULD BE HISTORY.
I DON'T CARE WHAT THE WORLD SAYS ABOUT YOU MUTANTS...
...YOU'RE *ACES* IN MY BOOK.
STAND TALL, SUNSPOT, AND LOOK PROUD-- YOU DONE *GOOD!*
THANK YOU, SERGEANT.
I SHALL TRY.
THE STREET WILL BE CLEAR SOON, BOBBY.
WHERE DO YOU WANT ME TO DRIVE YOU?
HOME.
BUT WHERE IS THAT?!
I WEAR THE UNIFORM OF THE *NEW MUTANTS*, THEY ARE MY FRIENDS--
--BUT DO I BELONG WITH THEM...
...OR WITH MY *FATHER?*
OR...NEITHER
RUTH, DO YOU KNOW WHAT COUNTRY MY MOTHER'S IN THIS WEEK?
BRAZIL, BOBBY. AT YOUR FAMILY HOME IN RIO DE JANIERO.
THEN, TAKE ME TO KENNEDY AIRPORT.

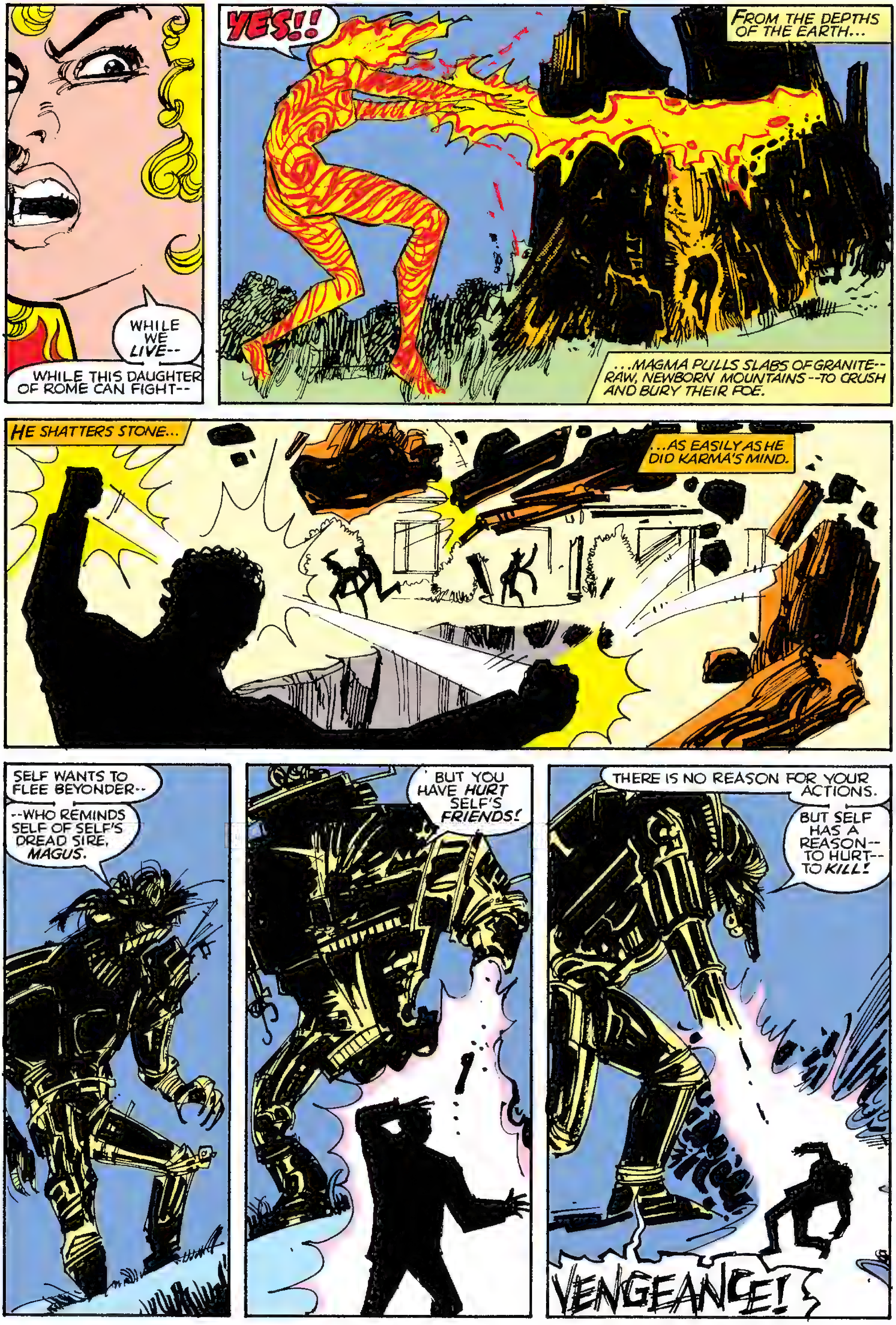

THE MANSION...
NIGHTS'RE STRETCHIN' LONGER-- SUMMER'S NEARLY GONE.
AH'LL BE HEADIN' HOME FOR THANKSGIVING.
YOU GOT ANY SUCH PLANS, DANI?
MISS MY FIRST HOLIDAY DINNER WITH MY FOLKS...
...SINCE I WAS A KID?
I SHOULD HAVE TOLD MAMA LAST NIGHT, WHILE I HAD THE CHANCE, HOW MUCH I LOVE HER.
YIAOWW!
WHAT THE HECK--?!
THAT FLASH OF LIGHT-- BLINDED ME!
SOMEBODY'S MATERIALIZED IN FRONT OF THE MANSION!
IT'S BEGUN-- THE CONFRONTATION I DREADED. OUR LAST STAND.
HOLY COW-- IS THAT WHO AH THINK IT IS?!!
WHY DOES IT HAVE TO BE LIKE THIS? THERE'S NO NEED TO FIGHT-- SURELY WE CAN REASON WITH HIM.
ALARM! INTRUDER HOSTILE THREAT DANGER!
NO NEED TO YELL, WARLOCK. AND LESS NEED TO BE AFRAID.
WHOMEVER IS HERE, WE CAN SURELY HANDLE HIM.
SCREAM!
LIFE TERMINATOR UNLIFE DISCORPORATION MAKER SHATTERER LIFE FOE!
FEAR FLEE DOOM!!

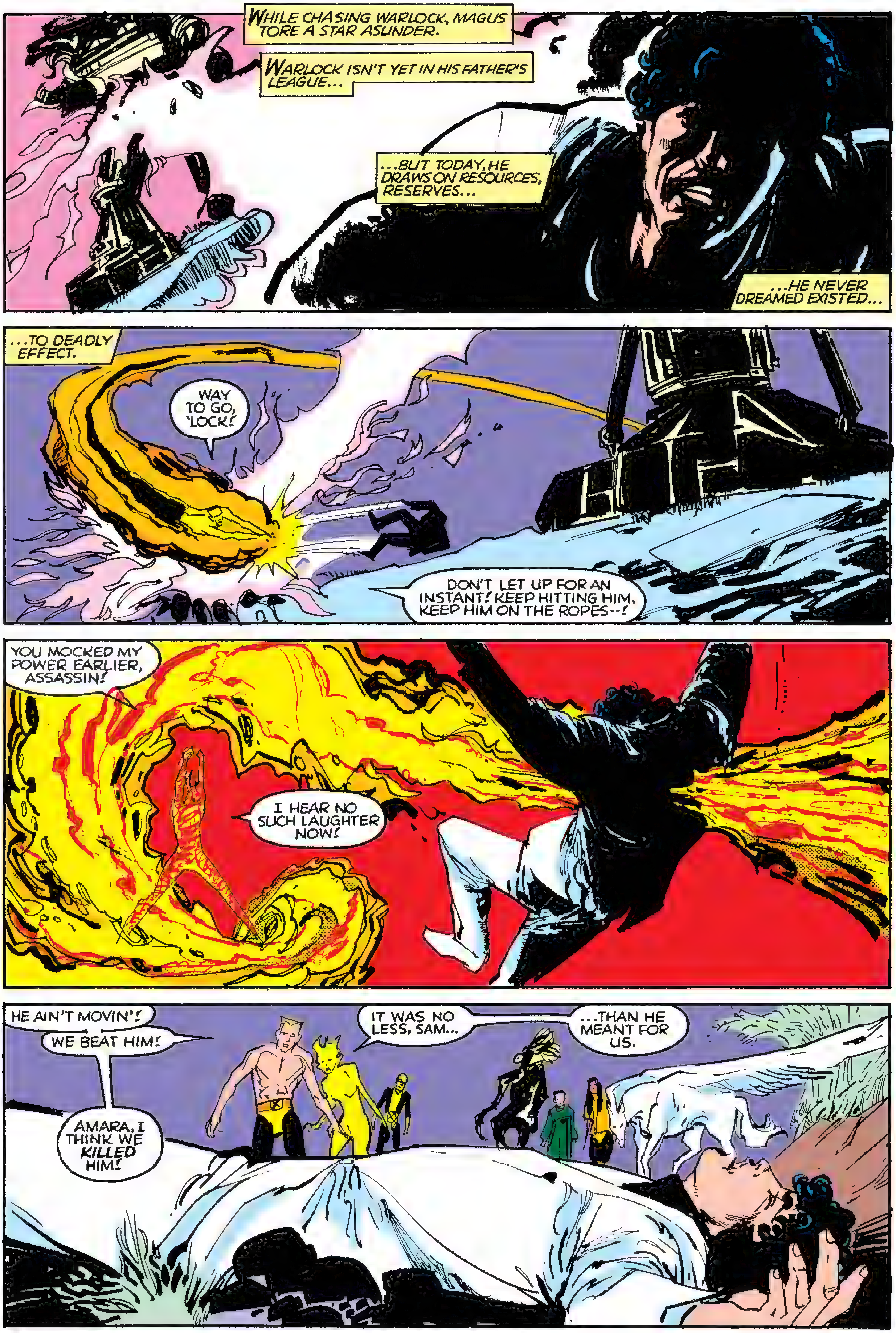

FLIGHT WILL NOT SAVE YOU, WARLOCK.
DO YOU REMEMBER ME, MUTANTS?
BEYONDER!
YES, THE ONE FROM BEYOND.
A STRANGER TO YOUR COSMOS. A SEEKER AFTER TRUTH, WHOSE QUEST WAS TO DIVINE THE PURPOSE AND MEANING OF HIS OWN EXISTENCE.
I OFFERED YOU THE PATH TO GLORY--
--A TRANSCENDENT JOY, A HARMONY WITH ALL CREATION--
--THE LIKE OF WHICH YOUR HUMAN, MORTAL BEINGS COULD NOT CONCEIVE.
YET YOU REFUSED.
I GOT A BAD FEELING ABOUT THIS.
HE'S MAD--
--IN BOTH SENSES OF THE WORD.
WILL HE PUNISH US?
YOU'RE COOL AS ICE, CHIEF.
AIN'T YOU AFRAID?
SCARED STIFF.
BUT I WON'T LET THE BEYONDER SEE THAT.
AVIER
CHOOl
I WAS YOUR CHOSEN MESSENGER.
ILLYANA-- DON'T!
SPARE MY FRIENDS...
...I BEG YOU.
IF ANYONE MUST PAY THE PRICE OF OUR DENIAL OF YOU...
...LET IT BE ME ALONE!

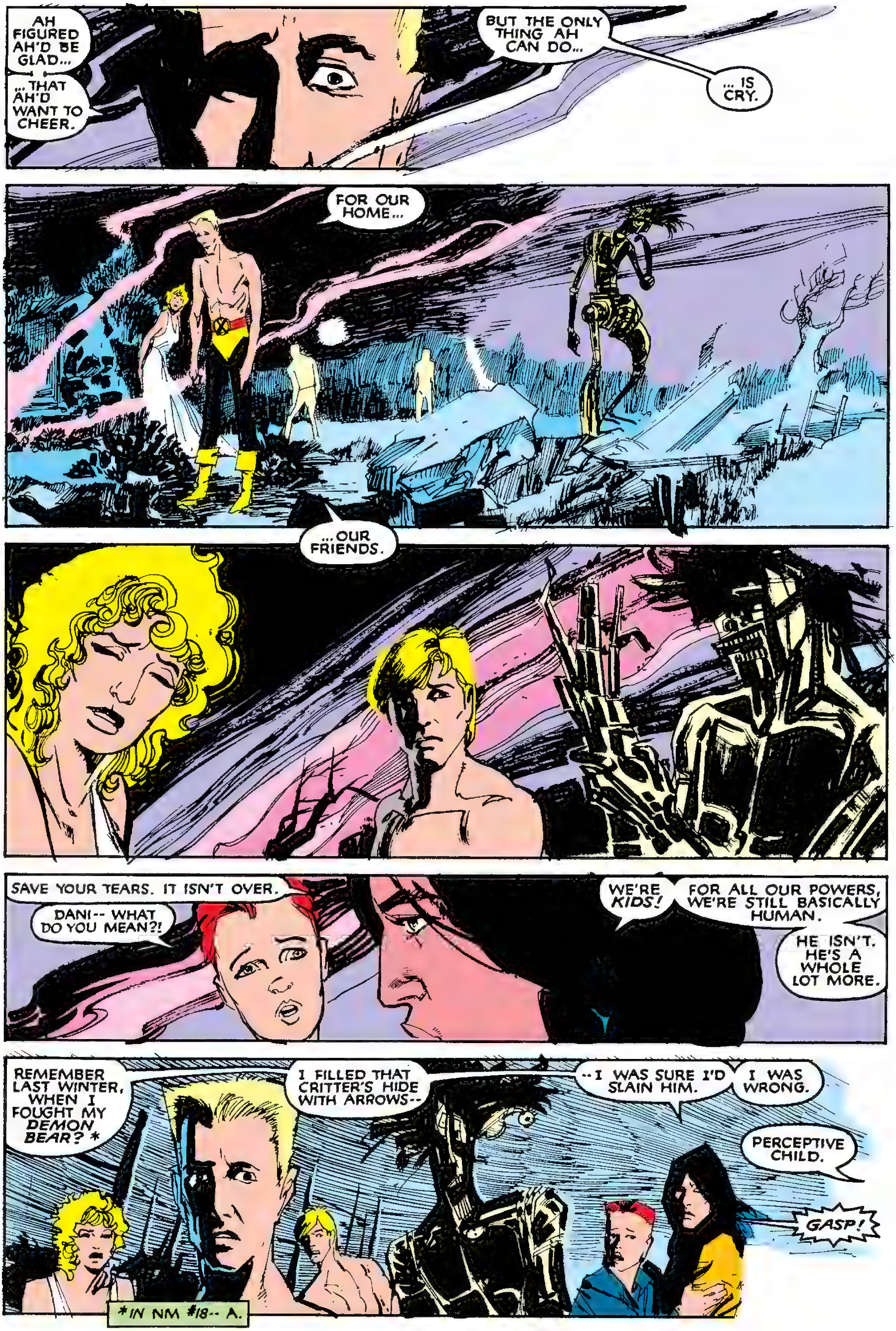

ILLYANA!
BUTCHER! MURDERER!
LET MAGMA'S FLAMES CONSIGN YOU TO THE CRUELEST PITS OF TARTARUS--
FOREVER!
I AM TIME AND SPACE PERSONIFIED, FINITE AND YET INFINITE.
WHOLE GALAXIES HAVE I CRUSHED...
...AND STARS CREATED.
YOUR FLAMES ARE LESS THAN NOTHING.
HOW ABOUT ME, CREEP--
--AND MY BEST SUNDAY PUNCH?!
WHAMMO!

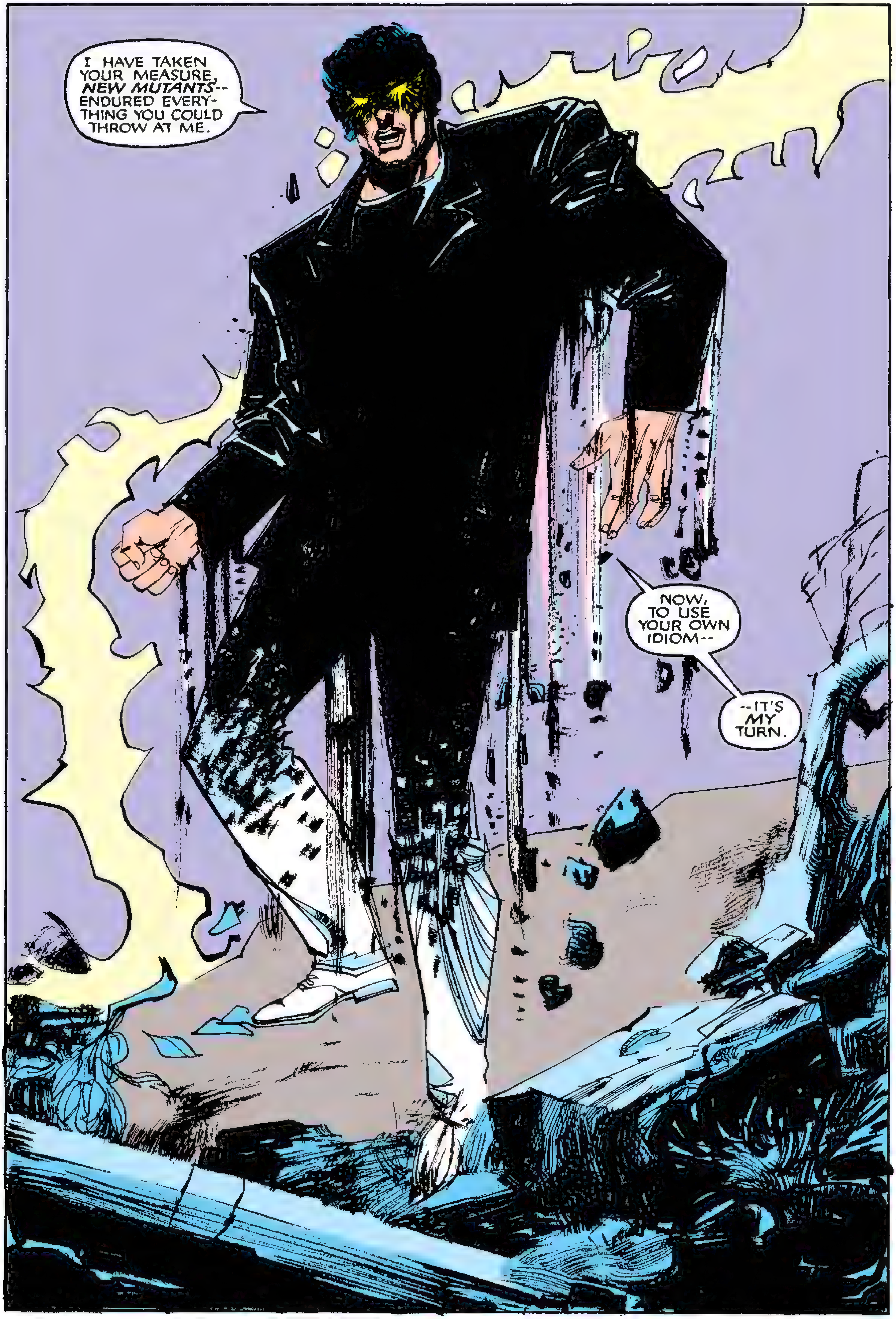

CRIPES, HE'S STILL STANDING!
MOST IMPRESSIVE, CANNONBALL.
BUT TELL ME...
...CAN YOU RECEIVE...
BRANKTCH
...AS WELL AS YOU GIVE?
PLASH!
THANK HEAVEN SAM'S POWER PROTECTS HIM WHEN HE BLASTS. HE LOOKS SHAKEN UP, BUT BASICALLY OKAY.
WE CAN'T MATCH THE BEYONDER'S PHYSICAL STRENGTH.
MAYBE I CAN REACH INTO HIS MIND AND FIND THE THING THAT TERRIFIES HIM MOST...
FAT CHANCE--BUT I'VE GOT NOTHING TO LOSE BY TRY...
AYAIEEEE!

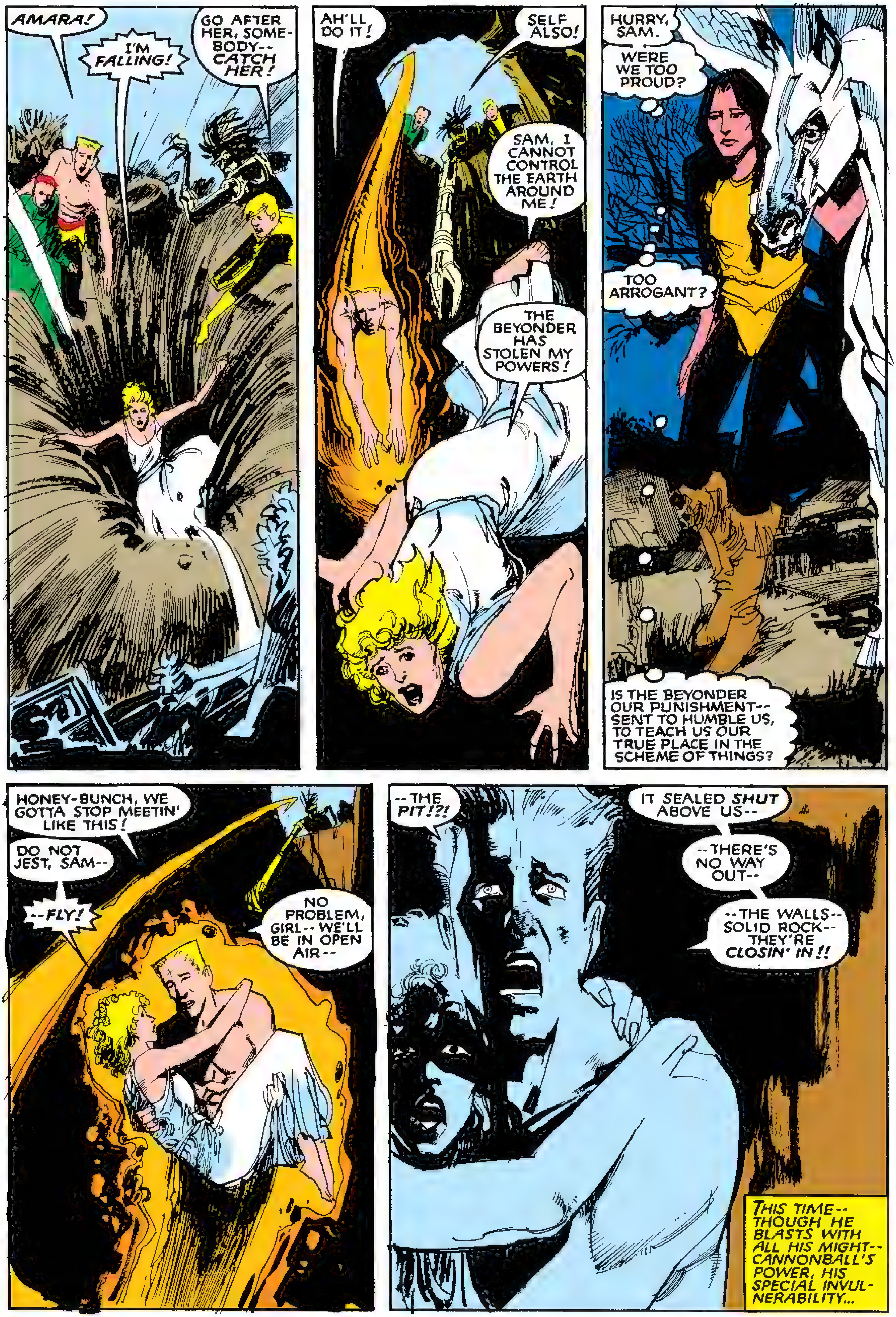

AGAINST HER WILL, DANI'S CONSCIOUSNESS IS DRAWN INTO HIS--TO BE OVERWHELMED BY CONCEPTS, REALITIES, THAT BEGGAR HER IMAGINATION.
SHE DISCOVERS AN ENTITY AS AFRAID OF LIFE AS OF DEATH--WHOSE ESSENCE IS AN AMALGAM OF BOTH, AND A DENIAL OF THEM--WHO IS INTEGRAL TO THE EXISTENCE AND FABRIC OF THE UNIVERSE...
...YET THREATENS THAT SAME UNIVERSE WITH EXTINCTION.
STOP IT! RELEASE HER!
YOU'RE KILLING DANI!!!
YES.
THAT IS MY INTENT.
IN AN ACT OF DESPERATION, KARMA ATTEMPTS TO POSSESS THE ONE FROM BEYOND--PUTTING HER ENTIRE HEART AND SOUL INTO THIS ATTACK--
--ONLY TO HAVE HER POWER REFLECTED BACK AT HER...
...WITH SUCH TERRIBLE FORCE...
...THAT HER MIND IS INSTANTLY DESTROYED.
SHAN...?!
SHE'S DEAD, DANI--DEAD!
FIRST ILLYANA--NOW SHAN--
--MY VISIONS ARE COMING TO PASS.
IS THERE NOTHING WE CAN DO?!
IS THERE NO HOPE?!!

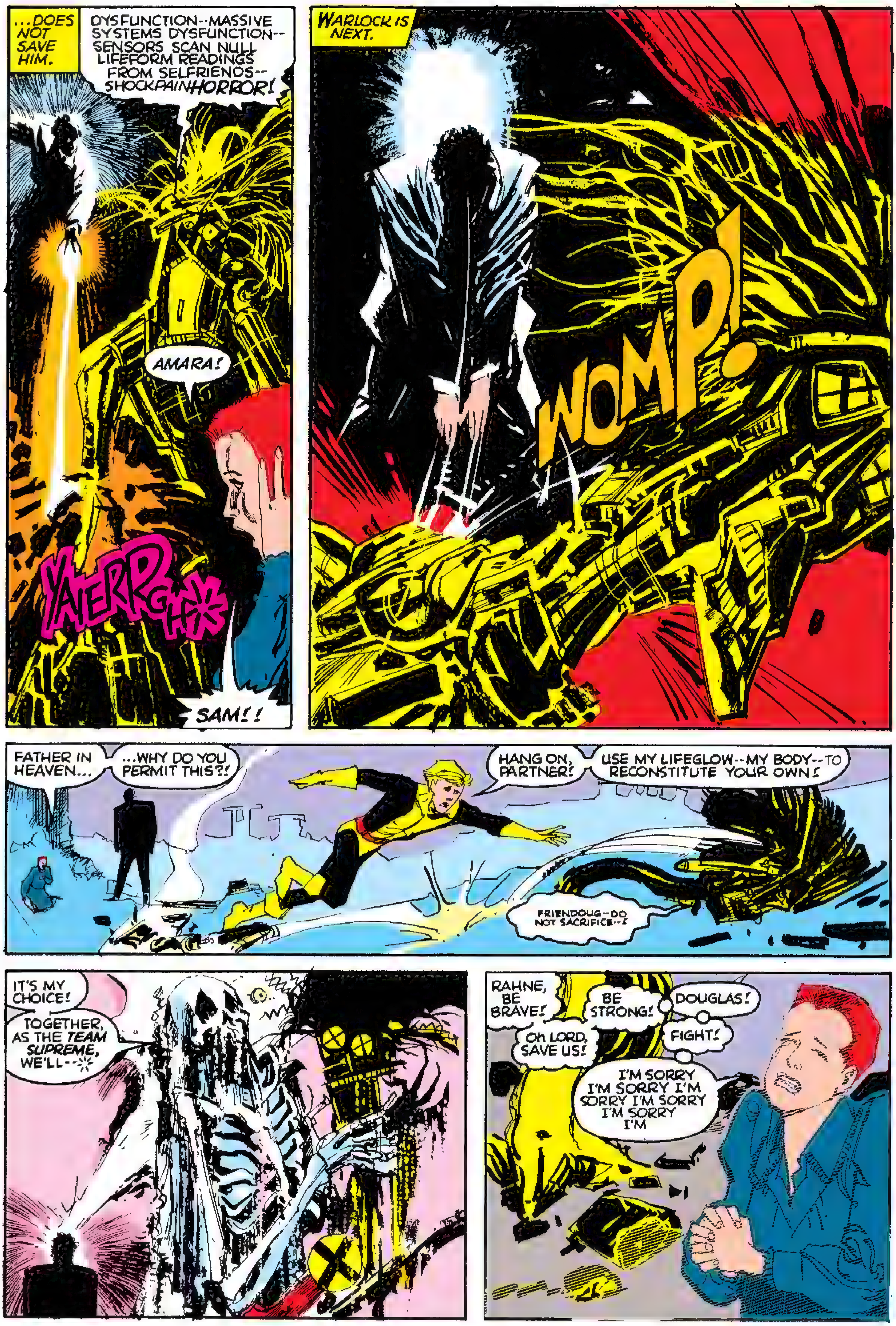

WHILE WE *LIVE*--
WHILE THIS DAUGHTER OF ROME CAN FIGHT--
YES!!
FROM THE DEPTHS OF THE EARTH...
...MAGMA PULLS SLABS OF GRANITE--RAW, NEWBORN MOUNTAINS--TO CRUSH AND BURY THEIR FOE.
HE SHATTERS STONE...
...AS EASILY AS HE DID KARMA'S MIND.
SELF WANTS TO FLEE BEYONDER--
--WHO REMINDS SELF OF SELF'S DREAD SIRE, *MAGUS*.
BUT YOU HAVE *HURT* SELF'S *FRIENDS!*
THERE IS NO REASON FOR YOUR ACTIONS.
BUT SELF HAS A REASON--TO HURT--TO *KILL!*
VENGEANCE!

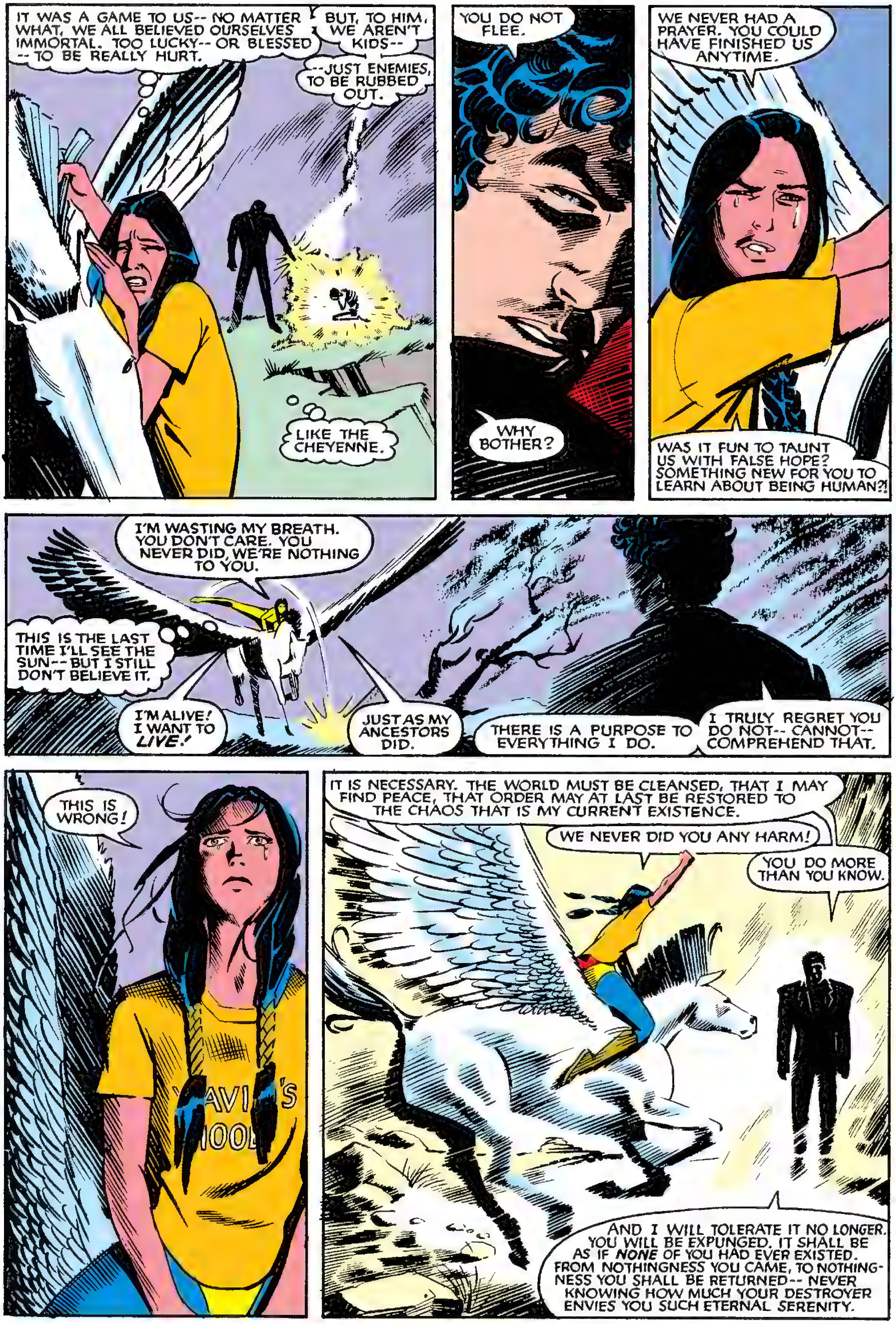

WHILE CHASING WARLOCK, MAGUS TORE A STAR ASUNDER.
WARLOCK ISN'T YET IN HIS FATHER'S LEAGUE...
...BUT TODAY, HE DRAWS ON RESOURCES, RESERVES...
...HE NEVER DREAMED EXISTED...
...TO DEADLY EFFECT.
WAY TO GO, 'LOCK!
DON'T LET UP FOR AN INSTANT! KEEP HITTING HIM, KEEP HIM ON THE ROPES--!
YOU MOCKED MY POWER EARLIER, ASSASSIN!
I HEAR NO SUCH LAUGHTER NOW!
HE AIN'T MOVIN'!
WE BEAT HIM!
AMARA, I THINK WE *KILLED* HIM!
IT WAS NO LESS, SAM...
...THAN HE MEANT FOR US.

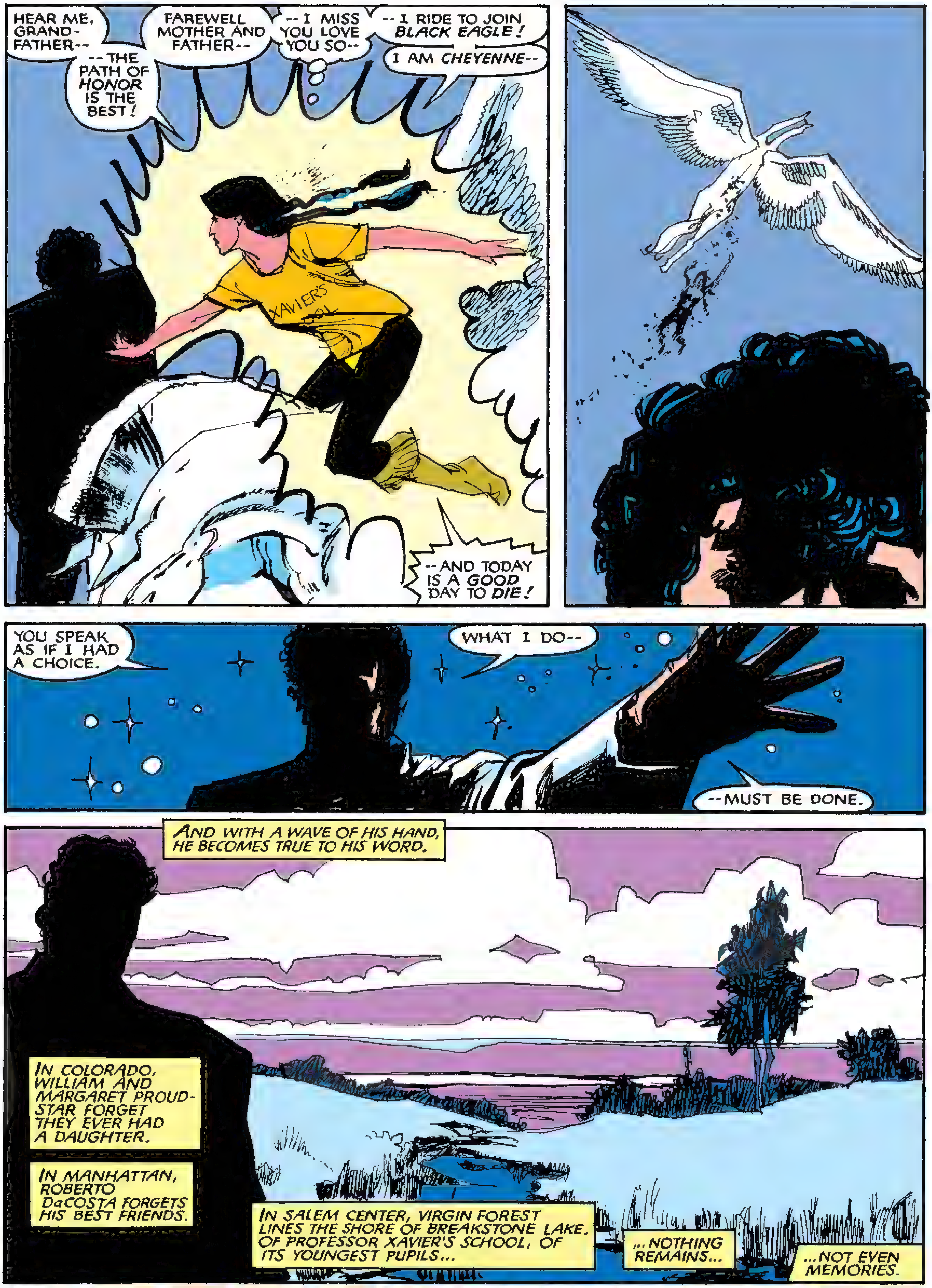

AH FIGURED AH'D BE GLAD...
... THAT AH'D WANT TO CHEER.
BUT THE ONLY THING AH CAN DO...
... IS CRY.
FOR OUR HOME...
...OUR FRIENDS.
SAVE YOUR TEARS. IT ISN'T OVER.
DANI-- WHAT DO YOU MEAN?!
WE'RE *KIDS!*
FOR ALL OUR POWERS, WE'RE STILL BASICALLY HUMAN.
HE ISN'T. HE'S A WHOLE LOT MORE.
REMEMBER LAST WINTER, WHEN I FOUGHT MY *DEMON BEAR?* *
I FILLED THAT CRITTER'S HIDE WITH ARROWS--
--I WAS SURE I'D SLAIN HIM.
I WAS WRONG.
PERCEPTIVE CHILD.
GASP!
*IN NM #18-- A.


I HAVE TAKEN YOUR MEASURE, *NEW MUTANTS*-- ENDURED EVERYTHING YOU COULD THROW AT ME.
NOW, TO USE YOUR OWN IDIOM--
--IT'S *MY* TURN.


AMARA!
I'M FALLING!
GO AFTER HER, SOMEBODY-- CATCH HER!
AH'LL DO IT!
SELF ALSO!
SAM, I CANNOT CONTROL THE EARTH AROUND ME!
THE BEYONDER HAS STOLEN MY POWERS!
HURRY, SAM.
WERE WE TOO PROUD?
TOO ARROGANT?
IS THE BEYONDER OUR PUNISHMENT-- SENT TO HUMBLE US, TO TEACH US OUR TRUE PLACE IN THE SCHEME OF THINGS?
HONEY-BUNCH, WE GOTTA STOP MEETIN' LIKE THIS!
DO NOT JEST, SAM--
--FLY!
NO PROBLEM, GIRL-- WE'LL BE IN OPEN AIR--
--THE PIT!?!
IT SEALED SHUT ABOVE US--
--THERE'S NO WAY OUT--
--THE WALLS-- SOLID ROCK-- THEY'RE CLOSIN' IN!!
THIS TIME-- THOUGH HE BLASTS WITH ALL HIS MIGHT-- CANNONBALL'S POWER, HIS SPECIAL INVULNERABILITY...


...DOES NOT SAVE HIM.
DYSFUNCTION--MASSIVE SYSTEMS DYSFUNCTION--SENSORS SCAN NULL LIFEFORM READINGS FROM SELFRIENDS--SHOCKPAINHORROR!
AMARA!
YAIERRGHH*
SAM!!
WARLOCK IS NEXT.
WOMP!
FATHER IN HEAVEN...
...WHY DO YOU PERMIT THIS?!
HANG ON, PARTNER!
USE MY LIFEGLOW--MY BODY--TO RECONSTITUTE YOUR OWN!
FRIENDOUG--DO NOT SACRIFICE--!
IT'S MY CHOICE!
TOGETHER, AS THE TEAM SUPREME, WE'LL--*
RAHNE, BE BRAVE!
BE STRONG!
DOUGLAS!
Oh LORD, SAVE US!
FIGHT!
I'M SORRY I'M SORRY I'M SORRY I'M SORRY I'M SORRY I'M


IT WAS A GAME TO US-- NO MATTER WHAT, WE ALL BELIEVED OURSELVES IMMORTAL. TOO LUCKY-- OR BLESSED -- TO BE REALLY HURT.
BUT, TO HIM, WE AREN'T KIDS--
--JUST ENEMIES, TO BE RUBBED OUT.
LIKE THE CHEYENNE.
YOU DO NOT FLEE.
WHY BOTHER?
WE NEVER HAD A PRAYER. YOU COULD HAVE FINISHED US ANYTIME.
WAS IT FUN TO TAUNT US WITH FALSE HOPE? SOMETHING NEW FOR YOU TO LEARN ABOUT BEING HUMAN?!
I'M WASTING MY BREATH. YOU DON'T CARE. YOU NEVER DID, WE'RE NOTHING TO YOU.
THIS IS THE LAST TIME I'LL SEE THE SUN-- BUT I STILL DON'T BELIEVE IT.
I'M ALIVE! I WANT TO *LIVE!*
JUST AS MY ANCESTORS DID.
THERE IS A PURPOSE TO EVERYTHING I DO.
I TRULY REGRET YOU DO NOT-- CANNOT-- COMPREHEND THAT.
THIS IS WRONG!
IT IS NECESSARY. THE WORLD MUST BE *CLEANSED*, THAT I MAY FIND PEACE, THAT ORDER MAY AT *LAST* BE RESTORED TO THE *CHAOS* THAT IS MY CURRENT EXISTENCE.
WE NEVER DID YOU ANY HARM!
YOU DO MORE THAN YOU KNOW.
AND I WILL TOLERATE IT NO LONGER. YOU WILL BE EXPUNGED. IT SHALL BE AS IF *NONE* OF YOU HAD EVER EXISTED. FROM NOTHINGNESS YOU CAME, TO NOTHINGNESS YOU SHALL BE RETURNED-- NEVER KNOWING HOW MUCH YOUR DESTROYER ENVIES YOU SUCH ETERNAL SERENITY.


HEAR ME, GRAND-FATHER--
--THE PATH OF HONOR IS THE BEST!
FAREWELL MOTHER AND FATHER--
--I MISS YOU LOVE YOU SO--
--I RIDE TO JOIN BLACK EAGLE!
I AM CHEYENNE--
--AND TODAY IS A GOOD DAY TO DIE!
XAVIER'S SCHOOL
YOU SPEAK AS IF I HAD A CHOICE.
WHAT I DO--
--MUST BE DONE.
AND WITH A WAVE OF HIS HAND, HE BECOMES TRUE TO HIS WORD.
IN COLORADO, WILLIAM AND MARGARET PROUDSTAR FORGET THEY EVER HAD A DAUGHTER.
IN MANHATTAN, ROBERTO DaCOSTA FORGETS HIS BEST FRIENDS.
IN SALEM CENTER, VIRGIN FOREST LINES THE SHORE OF BREAKSTONE LAKE. OF PROFESSOR XAVIER'S SCHOOL, OF ITS YOUNGEST PUPILS...
...NOTHING REMAINS...
...NOT EVEN MEMORIES.

NEXT: **AFTERMATH**

MARVEL 25TH ANNIVERSARY
THE NEW MUTANTS
© 1985 MARVEL COMICS GROUP
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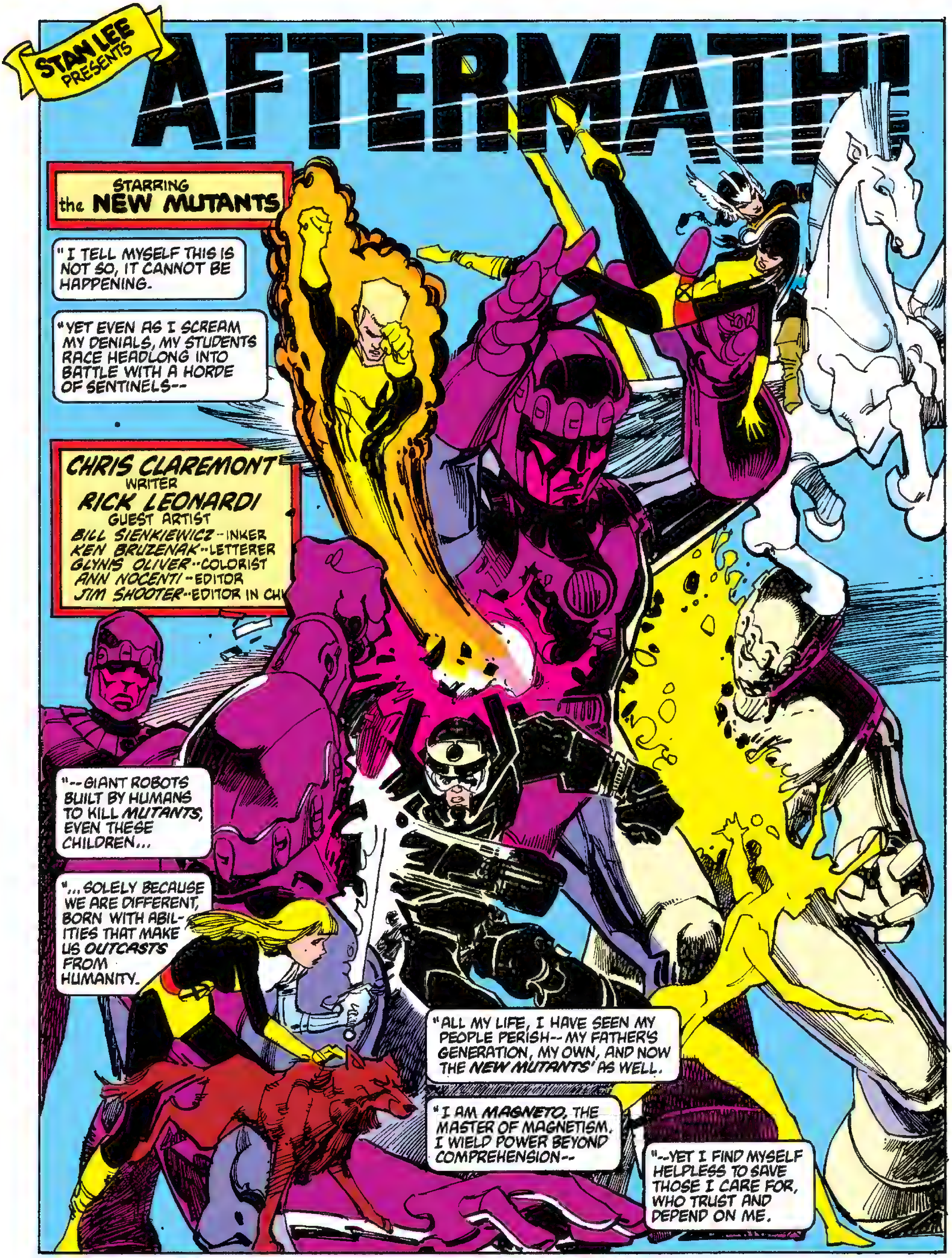
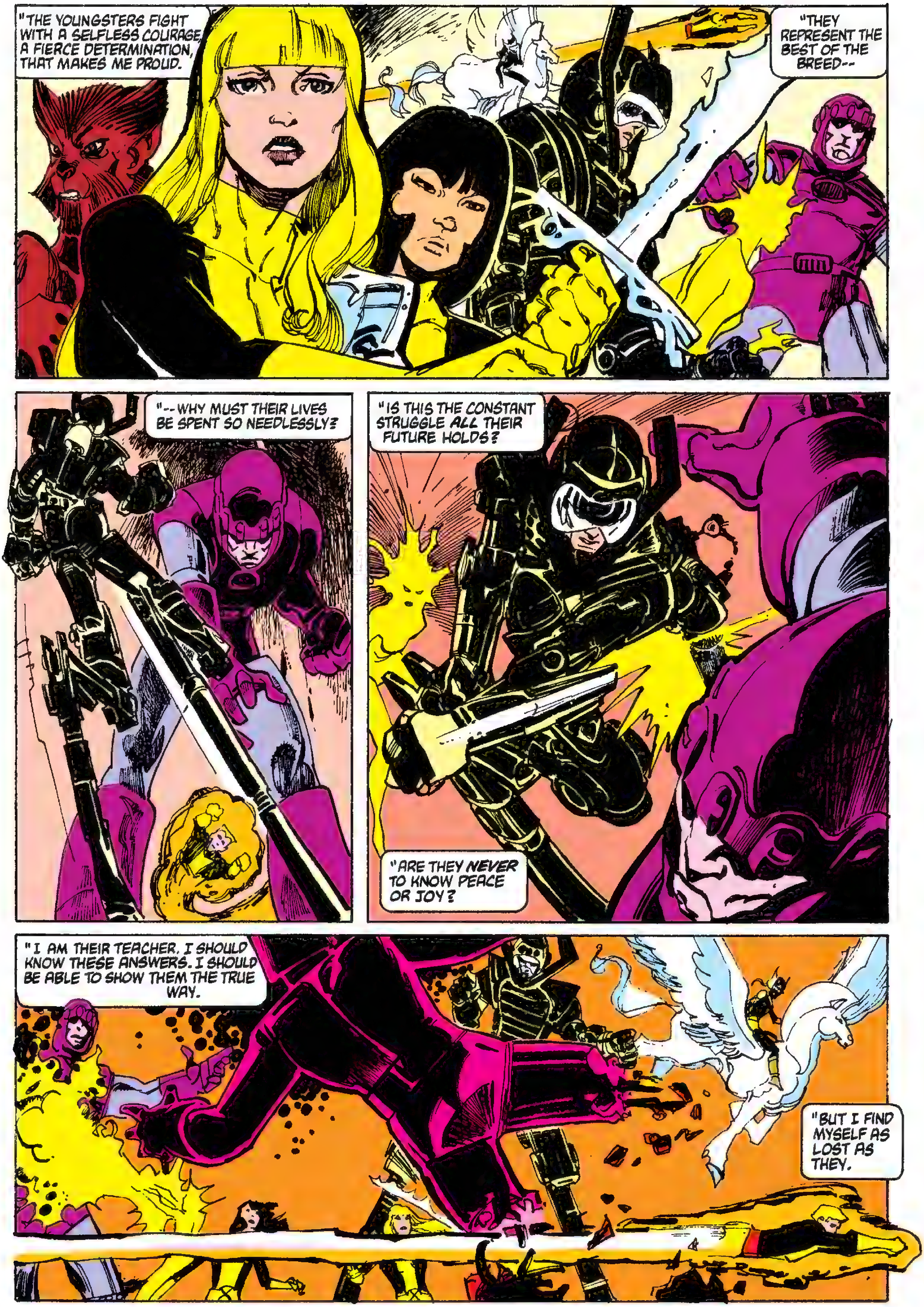
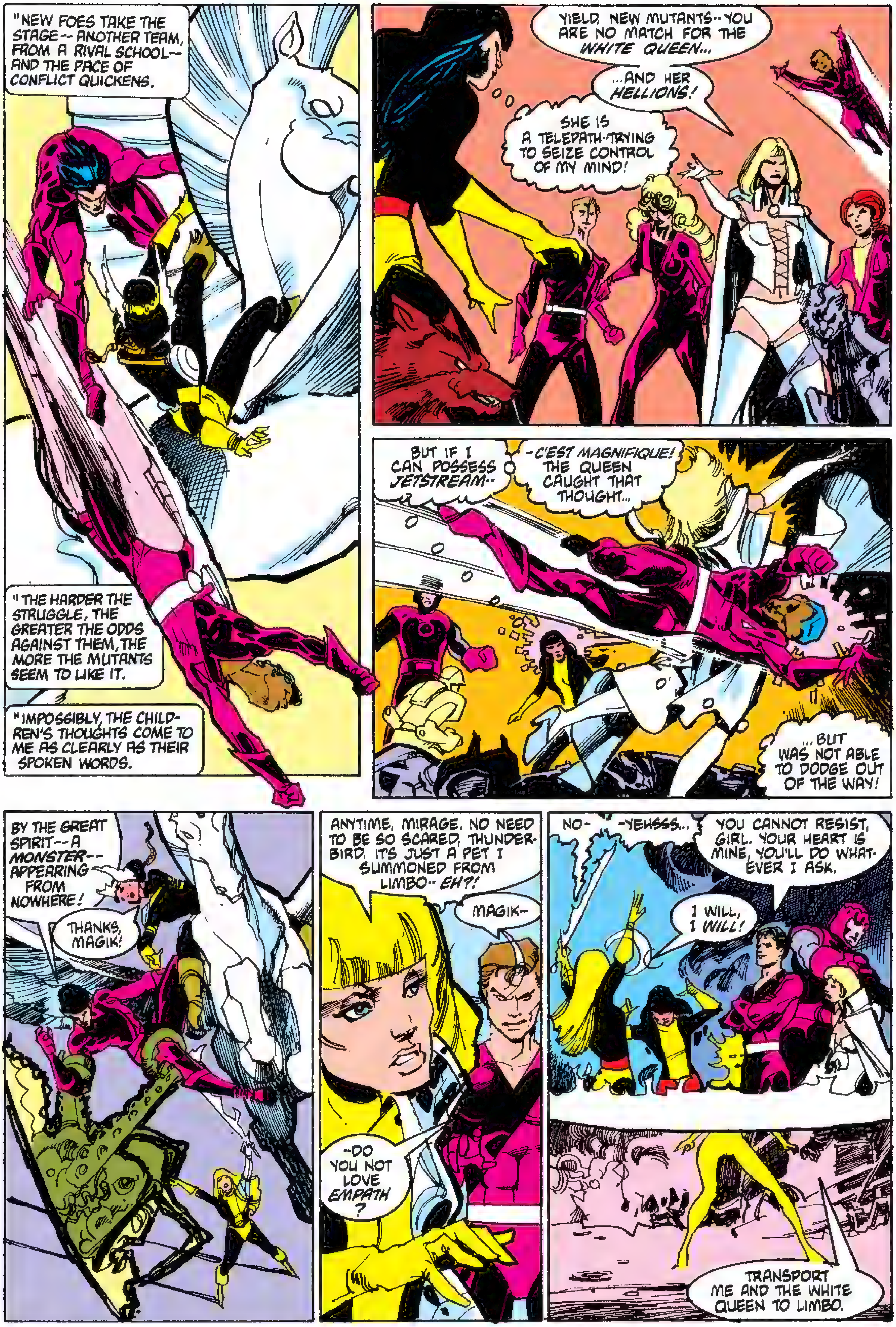
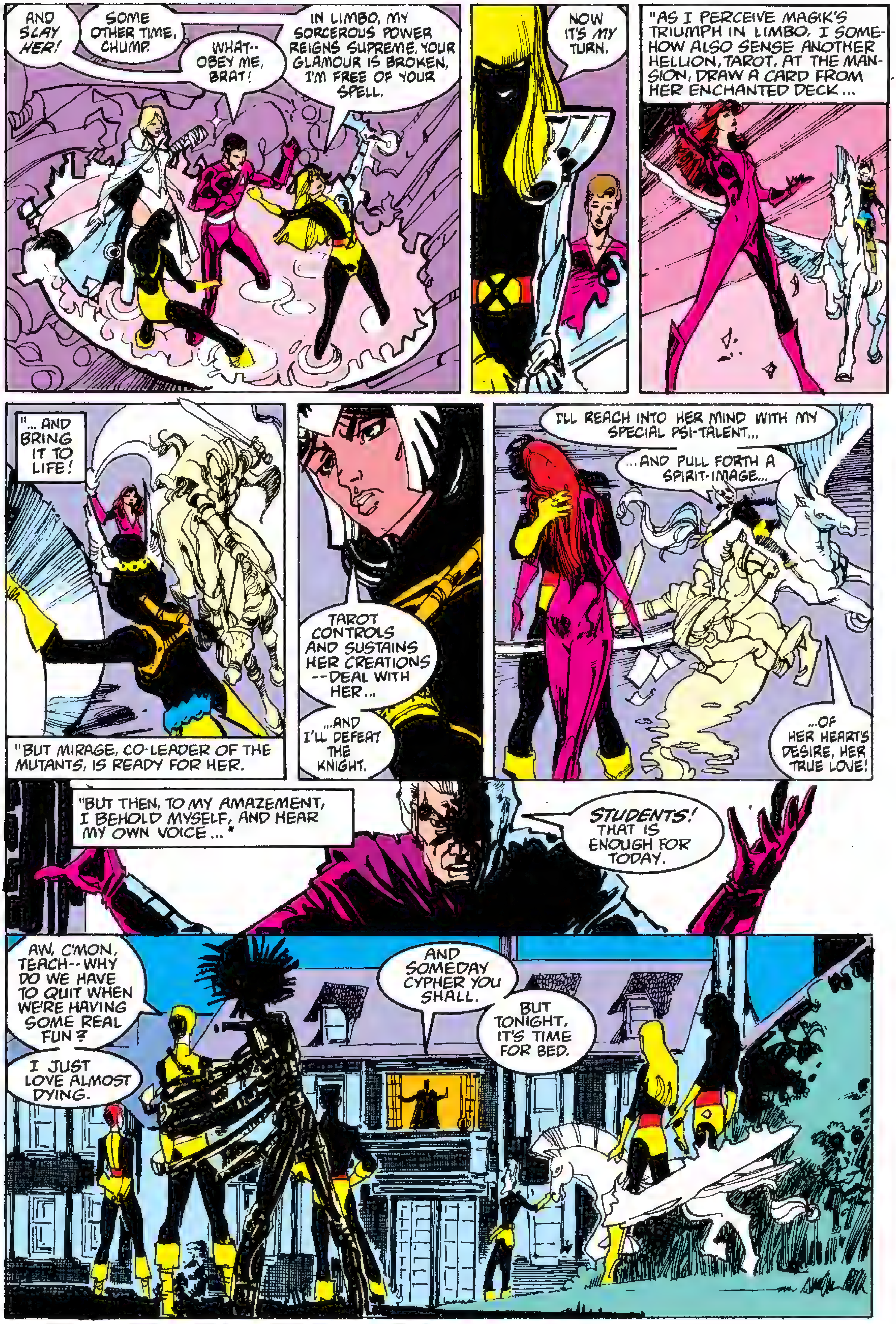
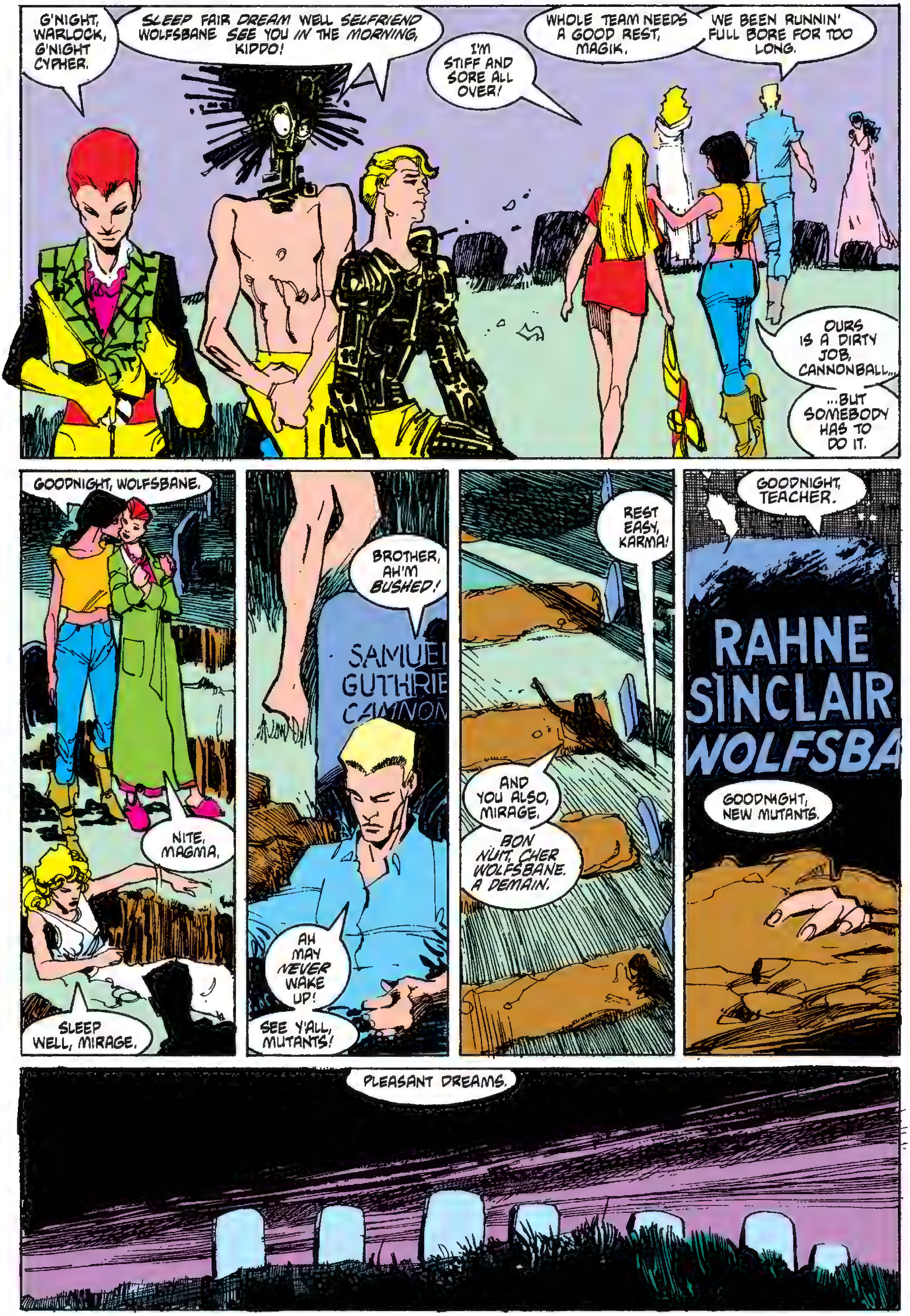
38
APR
02207
APPROVED BY THE COMICS CODE AUTHORITY
PROFESSOR X R'S
SCHOOL FOR GIFTED NGSTERS
WARLOCK
ES
MIRAGE
MAGIK
CYPHE
KARMA
CANNONBALL
MAGMA

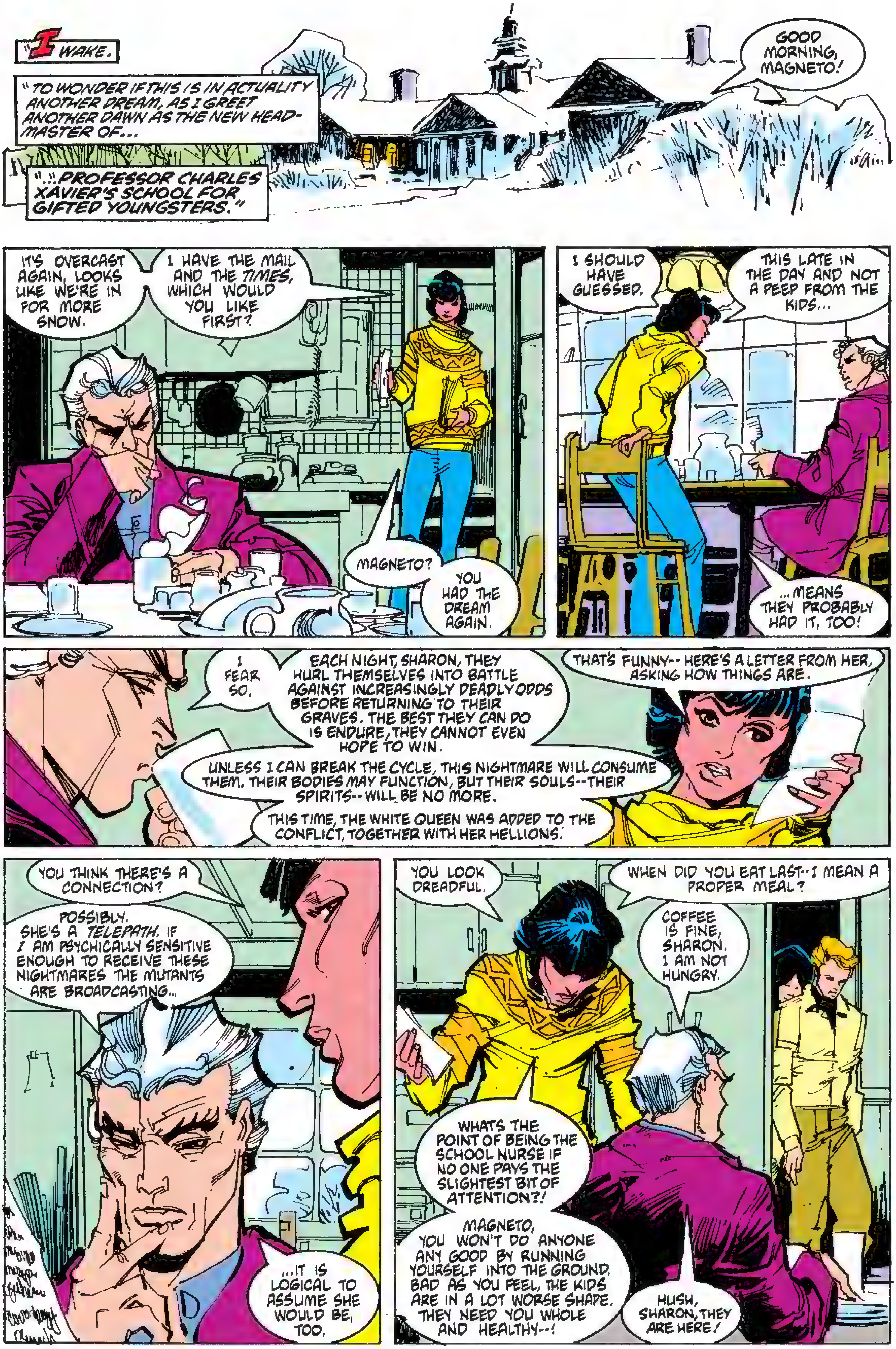

STAN LEE PRESENTS
AFTERMATH!
STARRING the NEW MUTANTS
"I TELL MYSELF THIS IS NOT SO, IT CANNOT BE HAPPENING.
"YET EVEN AS I SCREAM MY DENIALS, MY STUDENTS RACE HEADLONG INTO BATTLE WITH A HORDE OF SENTINELS--
CHRIS CLAREMONT WRITER
RICK LEONARDI GUEST ARTIST
BILL SIENKIEWICZ--INKER
KEN BRUZENAK--LETTERER
GLYNIS OLIVER--COLORIST
ANN NOCENTI--EDITOR
JIM SHOOTER--EDITOR IN CHI
"--GIANT ROBOTS BUILT BY HUMANS TO KILL MUTANTS, EVEN THESE CHILDREN...
"...SOLELY BECAUSE WE ARE DIFFERENT, BORN WITH ABILITIES THAT MAKE US OUTCASTS FROM HUMANITY.
"ALL MY LIFE, I HAVE SEEN MY PEOPLE PERISH-- MY FATHER'S GENERATION, MY OWN, AND NOW THE NEW MUTANTS' AS WELL.
"I AM MAGNETO, THE MASTER OF MAGNETISM. I WIELD POWER BEYOND COMPREHENSION--
"--YET I FIND MYSELF HELPLESS TO SAVE THOSE I CARE FOR, WHO TRUST AND DEPEND ON ME.

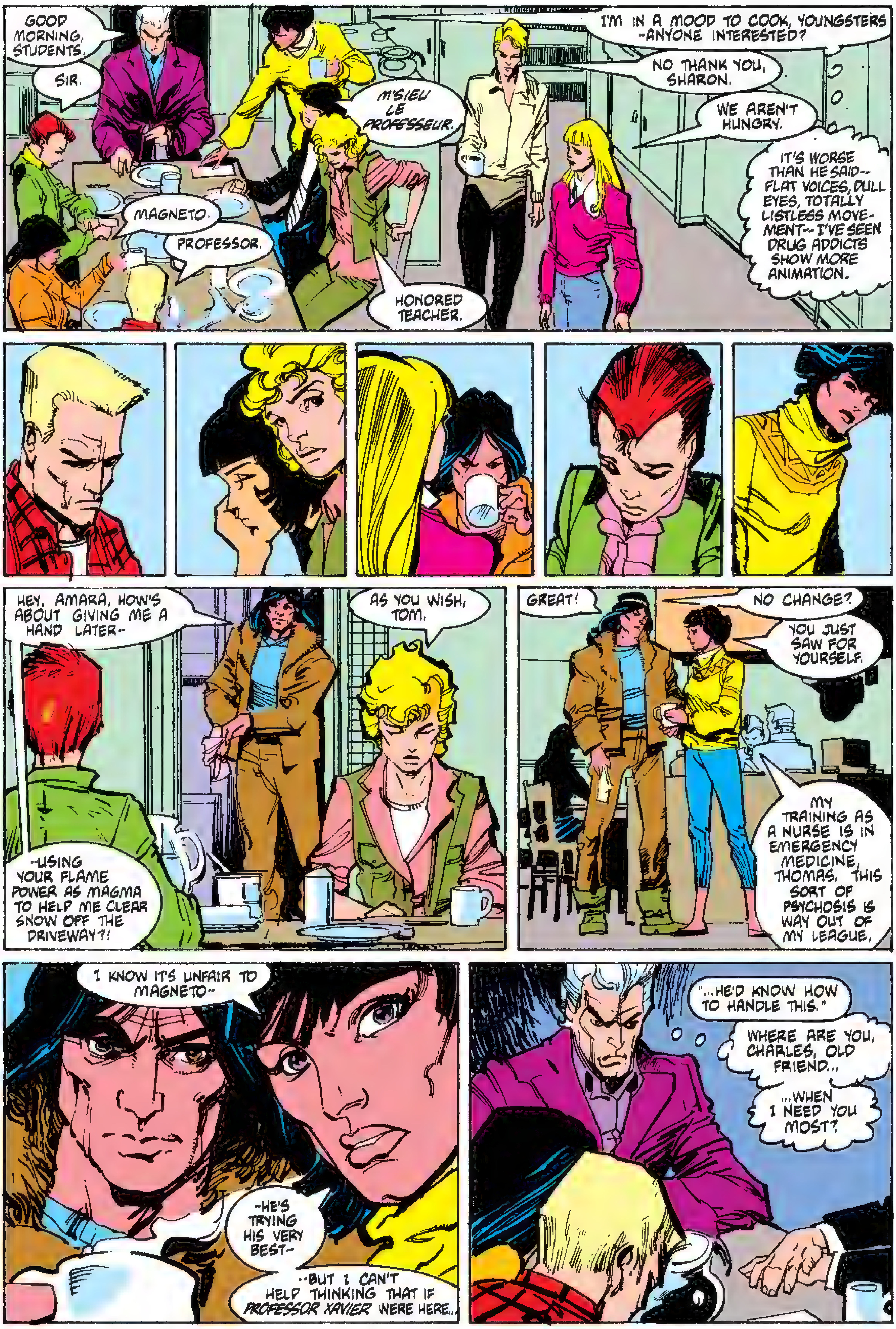

"THE YOUNGSTERS FIGHT WITH A SELFLESS COURAGE, A FIERCE DETERMINATION, THAT MAKES ME PROUD.
"THEY REPRESENT THE BEST OF THE BREED--
"--WHY MUST THEIR LIVES BE SPENT SO NEEDLESSLY?
"IS THIS THE CONSTANT STRUGGLE ALL THEIR FUTURE HOLDS?
"ARE THEY NEVER TO KNOW PEACE OR JOY?
"I AM THEIR TEACHER. I SHOULD KNOW THESE ANSWERS. I SHOULD BE ABLE TO SHOW THEM THE TRUE WAY.
"BUT I FIND MYSELF AS LOST AS THEY.

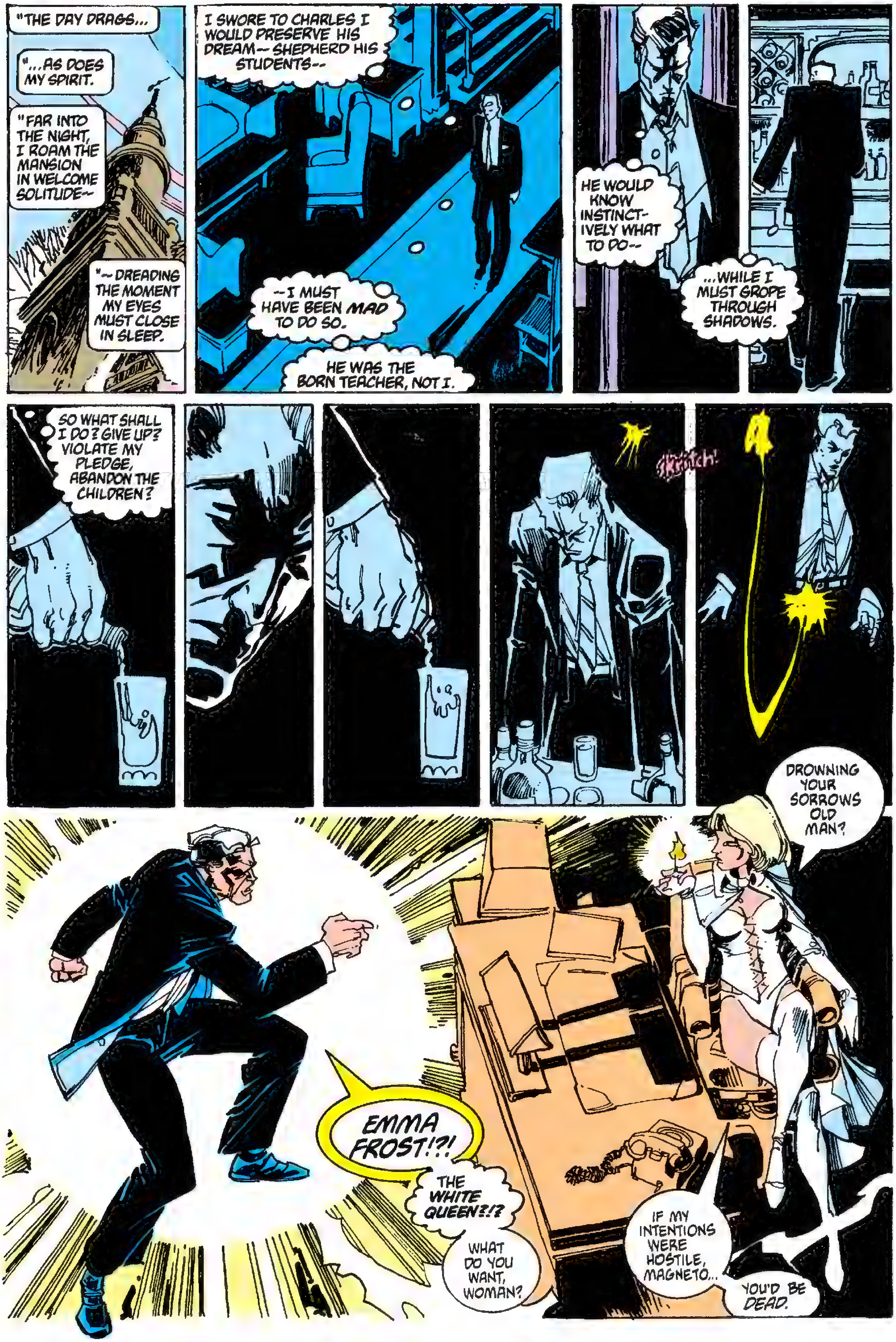

"NEW FOES TAKE THE STAGE -- ANOTHER TEAM, FROM A RIVAL SCHOOL -- AND THE PACE OF CONFLICT QUICKENS.
"THE HARDER THE STRUGGLE, THE GREATER THE ODDS AGAINST THEM, THE MORE THE MUTANTS SEEM TO LIKE IT.
"IMPOSSIBLY, THE CHILDREN'S THOUGHTS COME TO ME AS CLEARLY AS THEIR SPOKEN WORDS.
YIELD, NEW MUTANTS -- YOU ARE NO MATCH FOR THE *WHITE QUEEN...*
...AND HER *HELLIONS!*
SHE IS A TELEPATH -- TRYING TO SEIZE CONTROL OF MY MIND!
BUT IF I CAN POSSESS *JETSTREAM--*
-C'EST MAGNIFIQUE! THE QUEEN CAUGHT THAT THOUGHT...
...BUT WAS NOT ABLE TO DODGE OUT OF THE WAY!
BY THE GREAT SPIRIT -- A *MONSTER --* APPEARING FROM NOWHERE!
THANKS, MAGIK!
ANYTIME, MIRAGE. NO NEED TO BE SO SCARED, THUNDERBIRD. IT'S JUST A PET I SUMMONED FROM LIMBO -- *EH?!*
MAGIK--
--DO YOU NOT LOVE *EMPATH?*
NO--
-YEHSSS...
YOU CANNOT RESIST, GIRL. YOUR HEART IS MINE. YOU'LL DO WHATEVER I ASK.
I WILL, I *WILL!*
TRANSPORT ME AND THE WHITE QUEEN TO LIMBO.

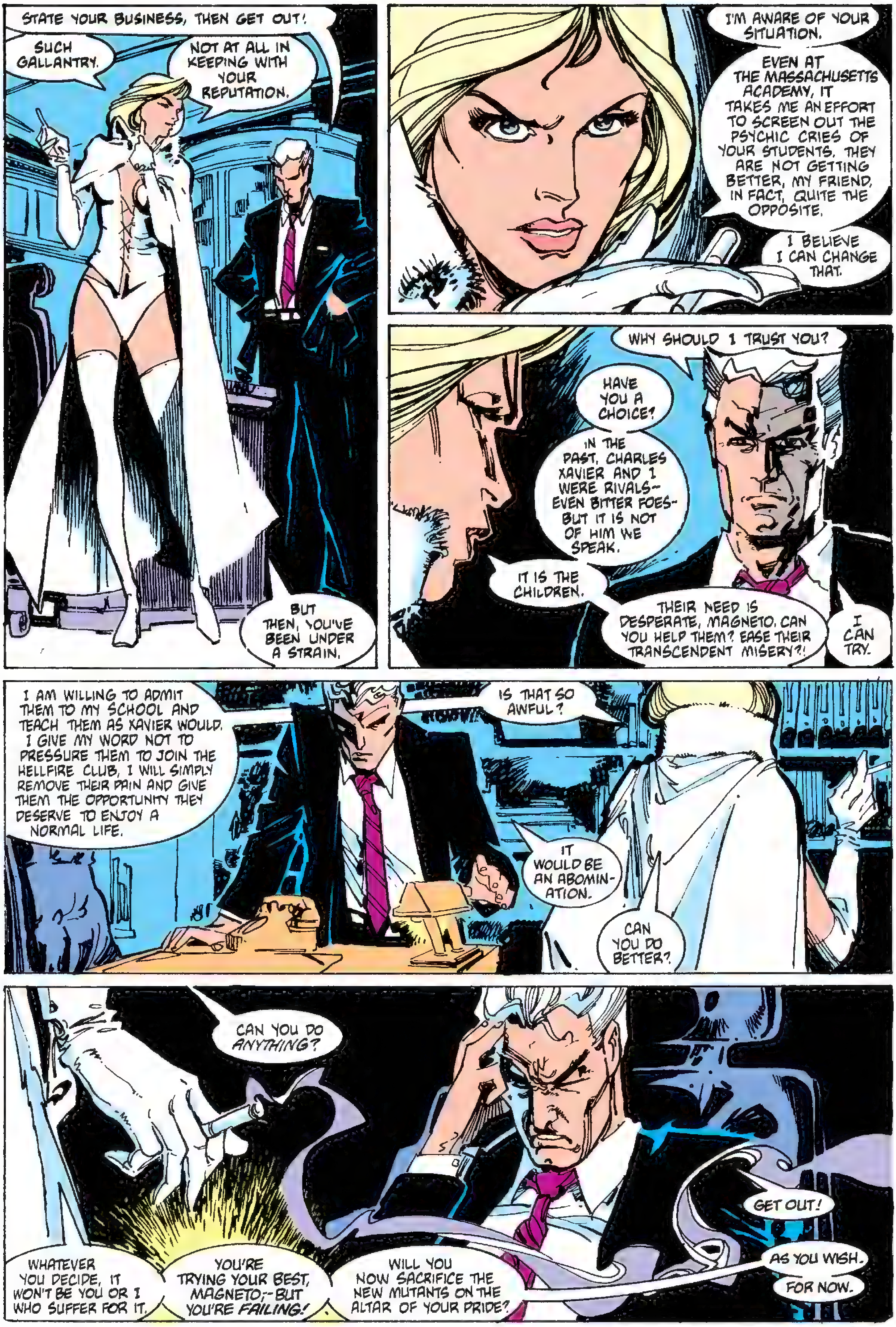

AND SLAY HER!
SOME OTHER TIME, CHUMP.
WHAT-- OBEY ME, BRAT!
IN LIMBO, MY SORCEROUS POWER REIGNS SUPREME. YOUR GLAMOUR IS BROKEN, I'M FREE OF YOUR SPELL.
NOW IT'S MY TURN.
"AS I PERCEIVE MAGIK'S TRIUMPH IN LIMBO, I SOMEHOW ALSO SENSE ANOTHER HELLION, TAROT, AT THE MANSION, DRAW A CARD FROM HER ENCHANTED DECK ...
"... AND BRING IT TO LIFE!
"BUT MIRAGE, CO-LEADER OF THE MUTANTS, IS READY FOR HER.
TAROT CONTROLS AND SUSTAINS HER CREATIONS --DEAL WITH HER...
...AND I'LL DEFEAT THE KNIGHT.
I'LL REACH INTO HER MIND WITH MY SPECIAL PSI-TALENT...
...AND PULL FORTH A SPIRIT-IMAGE...
...OF HER HEART'S DESIRE, HER TRUE LOVE!
"BUT THEN, TO MY AMAZEMENT, I BEHOLD MYSELF, AND HEAR MY OWN VOICE ..."
STUDENTS! THAT IS ENOUGH FOR TODAY.
AW, C'MON, TEACH--WHY DO WE HAVE TO QUIT WHEN WE'RE HAVING SOME REAL FUN?
I JUST LOVE ALMOST DYING.
AND SOMEDAY CYPHER YOU SHALL.
BUT TONIGHT, IT'S TIME FOR BED.

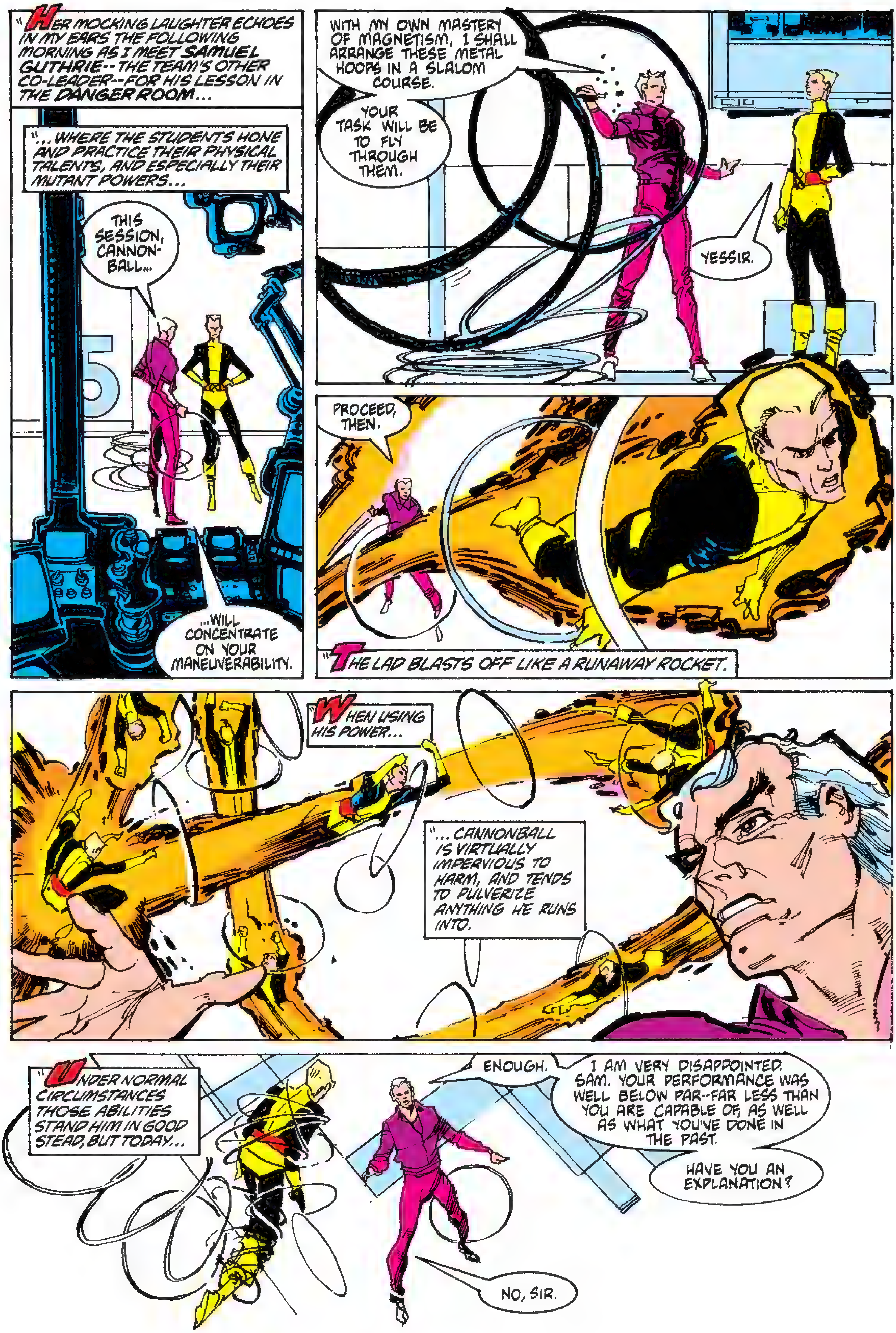

G'NIGHT, WARLOCK, G'NIGHT CYPHER.
SLEEP FAIR *DREAM* WELL *SELFRIEND* WOLFSBANE *SEE* YOU *IN* THE *MORNING*, KIDDO!
I'M STIFF AND SORE ALL OVER!
WHOLE TEAM NEEDS A GOOD REST, MAGIK.
WE BEEN RUNNIN' FULL BORE FOR TOO LONG.
OURS IS A DIRTY JOB, CANNONBALL...
...BUT SOMEBODY HAS TO DO IT.
GOODNIGHT, WOLFSBANE.
NITE, MAGMA.
SLEEP WELL, MIRAGE.
BROTHER, AH'M *BUSHED!*
SAMUEL GUTHRIE CANNON
AH MAY *NEVER* WAKE UP!
SEE Y'ALL, MUTANTS!
REST EASY, KARMA!
AND YOU ALSO, MIRAGE.
BON NUIT, CHER WOLFSBANE. A DEMAIN.
GOODNIGHT, TEACHER.
RAHNE SINCLAIR *WOLFSBA*
GOODNIGHT, NEW MUTANTS.
PLEASANT DREAMS.

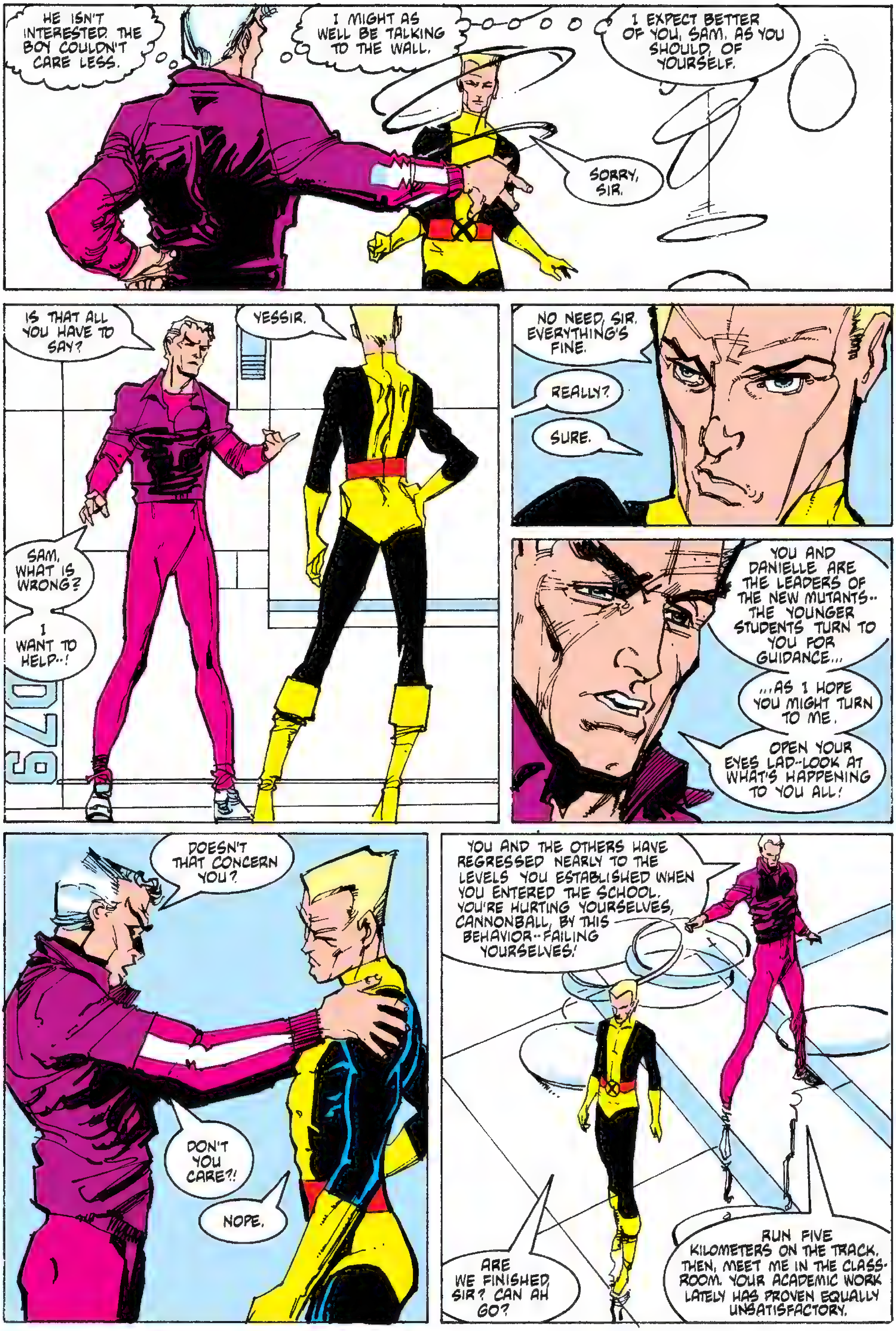

"I WAKE.
"TO WONDER IF THIS IS IN ACTUALITY ANOTHER DREAM, AS I GREET ANOTHER DAWN AS THE NEW HEADMASTER OF...
"...PROFESSOR CHARLES XAVIER'S SCHOOL FOR GIFTED YOUNGSTERS."
GOOD MORNING, MAGNETO!
IT'S OVERCAST AGAIN, LOOKS LIKE WE'RE IN FOR MORE SNOW.
I HAVE THE MAIL AND THE TIMES, WHICH WOULD YOU LIKE FIRST?
MAGNETO?
YOU HAD THE DREAM AGAIN.
I SHOULD HAVE GUESSED.
THIS LATE IN THE DAY AND NOT A PEEP FROM THE KIDS...
...MEANS THEY PROBABLY HAD IT, TOO!
I FEAR SO.
EACH NIGHT, SHARON, THEY HURL THEMSELVES INTO BATTLE AGAINST INCREASINGLY DEADLY ODDS BEFORE RETURNING TO THEIR GRAVES. THE BEST THEY CAN DO IS ENDURE, THEY CANNOT EVEN HOPE TO WIN.
UNLESS I CAN BREAK THE CYCLE, THIS NIGHTMARE WILL CONSUME THEM. THEIR BODIES MAY FUNCTION, BUT THEIR SOULS--THEIR SPIRITS--WILL BE NO MORE.
THIS TIME, THE WHITE QUEEN WAS ADDED TO THE CONFLICT, TOGETHER WITH HER HELLIONS.
THAT'S FUNNY-- HERE'S A LETTER FROM HER, ASKING HOW THINGS ARE.
YOU THINK THERE'S A CONNECTION?
POSSIBLY. SHE'S A TELEPATH. IF I AM PSYCHICALLY SENSITIVE ENOUGH TO RECEIVE THESE NIGHTMARES THE MUTANTS ARE BROADCASTING...
...IT IS LOGICAL TO ASSUME SHE WOULD BE, TOO.
YOU LOOK DREADFUL.
WHEN DID YOU EAT LAST--I MEAN A PROPER MEAL?
COFFEE IS FINE, SHARON. I AM NOT HUNGRY.
WHATS THE POINT OF BEING THE SCHOOL NURSE IF NO ONE PAYS THE SLIGHTEST BIT OF ATTENTION?!
MAGNETO, YOU WON'T DO ANYONE ANY GOOD BY RUNNING YOURSELF INTO THE GROUND. BAD AS YOU FEEL, THE KIDS ARE IN A LOT WORSE SHAPE. THEY NEED YOU WHOLE AND HEALTHY--!
HUSH, SHARON, THEY ARE HERE!

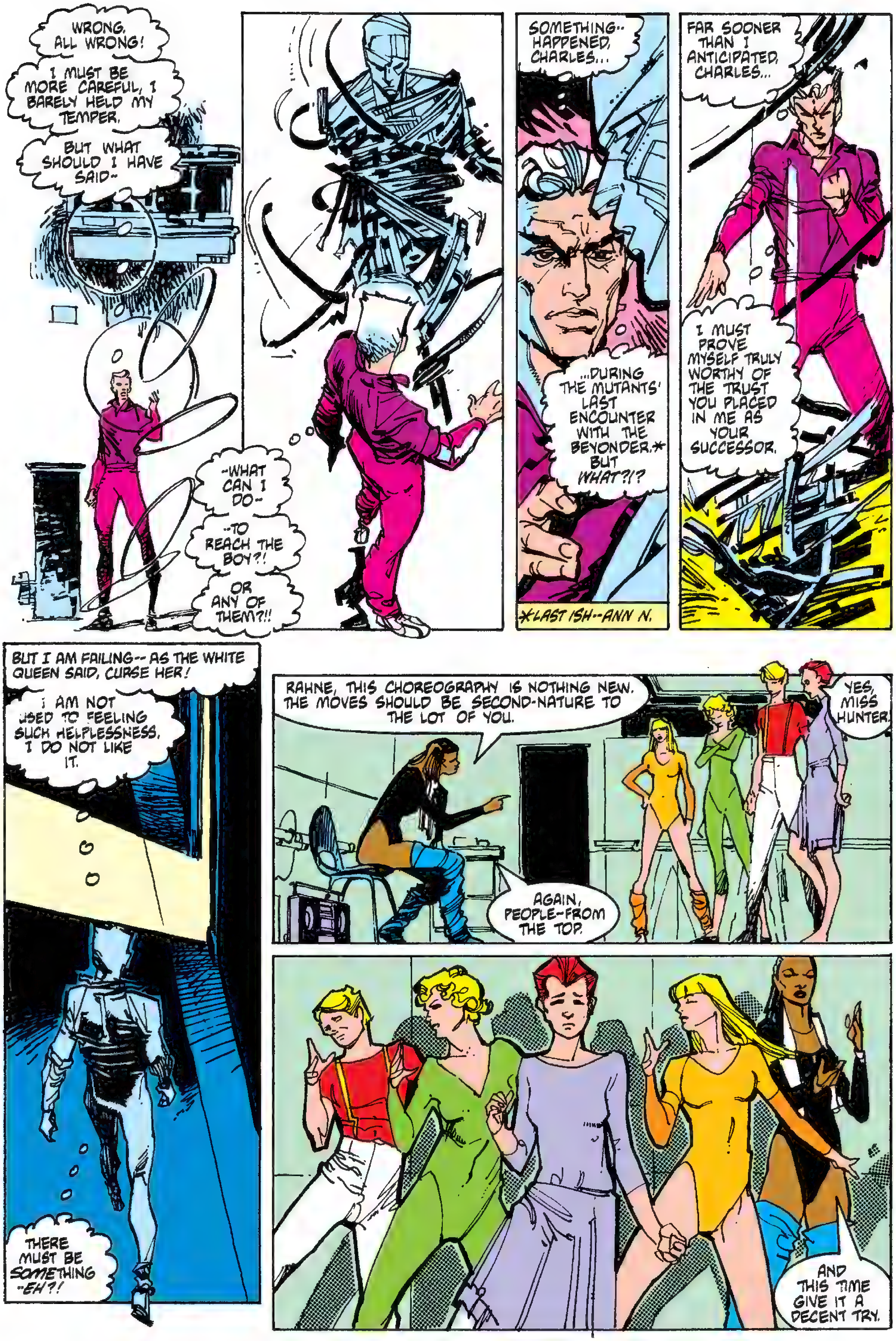

GOOD MORNING, STUDENTS.
SIR.
M'SIEU LE PROFESSEUR.
MAGNETO.
PROFESSOR.
HONORED TEACHER.
I'M IN A MOOD TO COOK, YOUNGSTERS --ANYONE INTERESTED?
NO THANK YOU, SHARON.
WE AREN'T HUNGRY.
IT'S WORSE THAN HE SAID-- FLAT VOICES, DULL EYES, TOTALLY LISTLESS MOVEMENT-- I'VE SEEN DRUG ADDICTS SHOW MORE ANIMATION.
HEY, AMARA, HOW'S ABOUT GIVING ME A HAND LATER--
--USING YOUR FLAME POWER AS MAGMA TO HELP ME CLEAR SNOW OFF THE DRIVEWAY?!
AS YOU WISH, TOM.
GREAT!
NO CHANGE?
YOU JUST SAW FOR YOURSELF.
MY TRAINING AS A NURSE IS IN EMERGENCY MEDICINE, THOMAS. THIS SORT OF PSYCHOSIS IS WAY OUT OF MY LEAGUE.
I KNOW IT'S UNFAIR TO MAGNETO--
-HE'S TRYING HIS VERY BEST--
--BUT I CAN'T HELP THINKING THAT IF PROFESSOR XAVIER WERE HERE...
"...HE'D KNOW HOW TO HANDLE THIS."
WHERE ARE YOU, CHARLES, OLD FRIEND...
...WHEN I NEED YOU MOST?

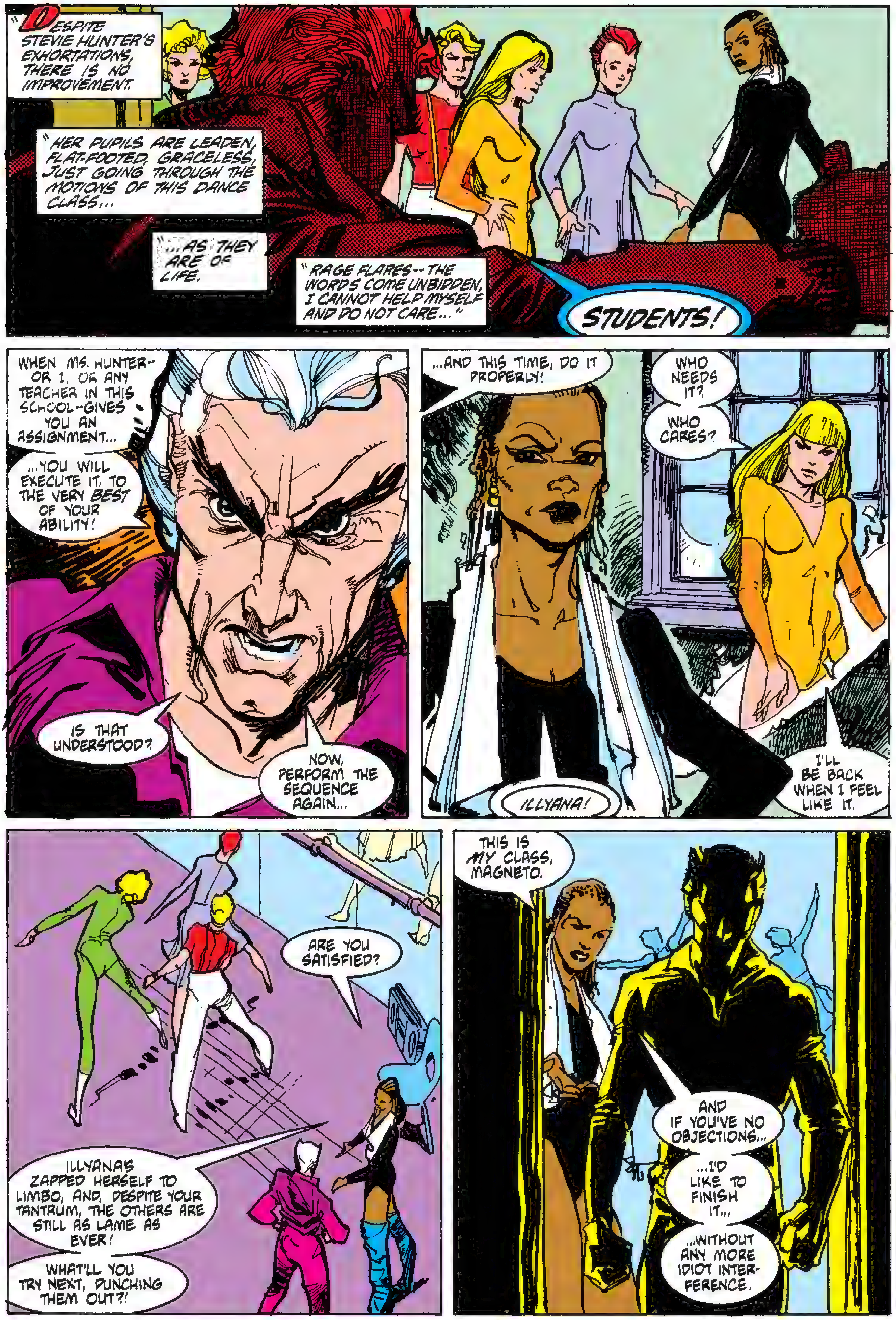

"THE DAY DRAGS...
"...AS DOES MY SPIRIT.
"FAR INTO THE NIGHT, I ROAM THE MANSION IN WELCOME SOLITUDE--
"--DREADING THE MOMENT MY EYES MUST CLOSE IN SLEEP.
I SWORE TO CHARLES I WOULD PRESERVE HIS DREAM--SHEPHERD HIS STUDENTS--
--I MUST HAVE BEEN MAD TO DO SO.
HE WAS THE BORN TEACHER, NOT I.
HE WOULD KNOW INSTINCTIVELY WHAT TO DO--
...WHILE I MUST GROPE THROUGH SHADOWS.
SO WHAT SHALL I DO? GIVE UP? VIOLATE MY PLEDGE, ABANDON THE CHILDREN?
SKRITCH!
DROWNING YOUR SORROWS OLD MAN?
EMMA FROST!?!
THE WHITE QUEEN?!?
WHAT DO YOU WANT, WOMAN?
IF MY INTENTIONS WERE HOSTILE, MAGNETO...
YOU'D BE DEAD.

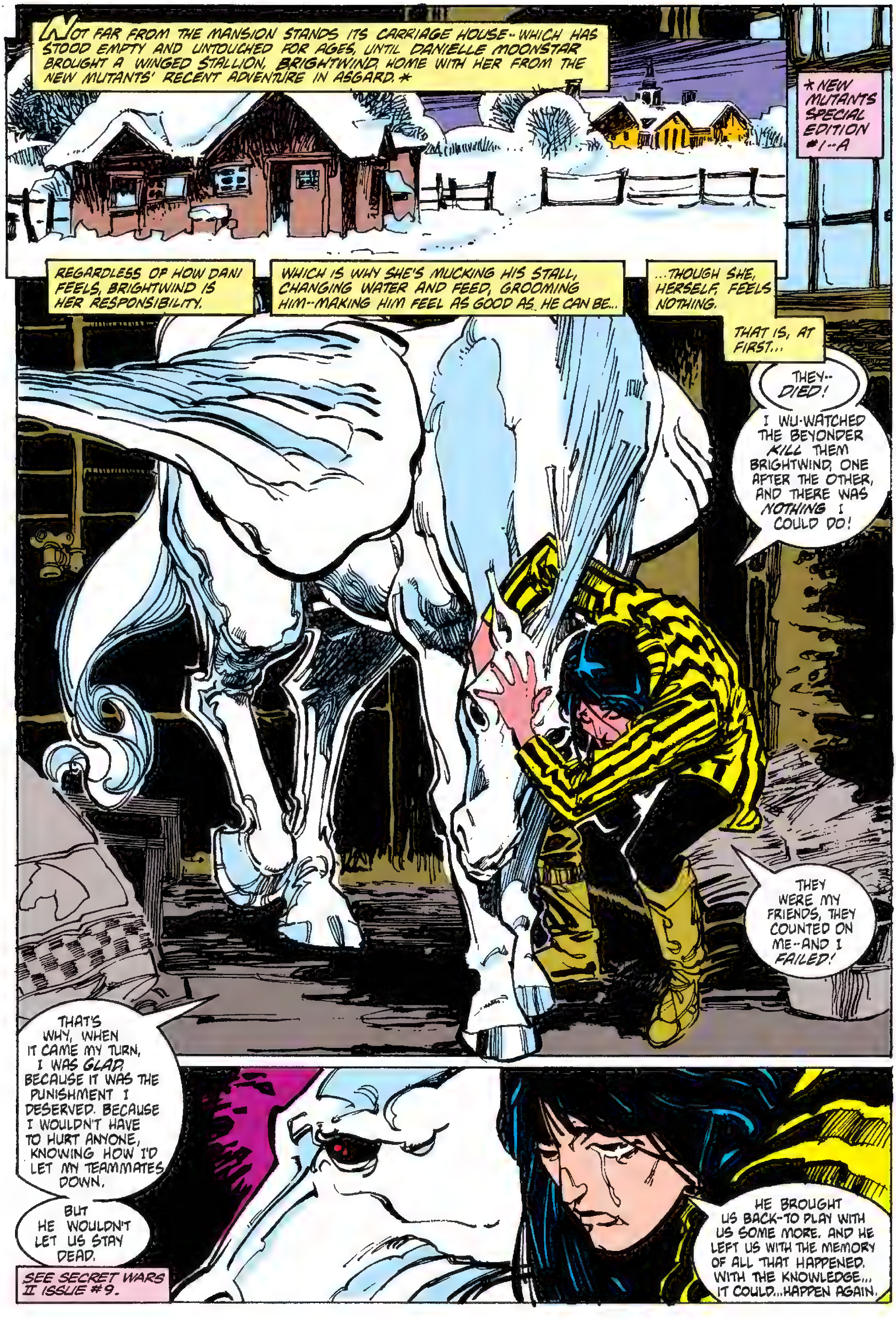

STATE YOUR BUSINESS, THEN GET OUT!
SUCH GALLANTRY.
NOT AT ALL IN KEEPING WITH YOUR REPUTATION.
BUT THEN, YOU'VE BEEN UNDER A STRAIN.
I'M AWARE OF YOUR SITUATION.
EVEN AT THE MASSACHUSETTS ACADEMY, IT TAKES ME AN EFFORT TO SCREEN OUT THE PSYCHIC CRIES OF YOUR STUDENTS. THEY ARE NOT GETTING BETTER, MY FRIEND. IN FACT, QUITE THE OPPOSITE.
I BELIEVE I CAN CHANGE THAT.
WHY SHOULD I TRUST YOU?
HAVE YOU A CHOICE?
IN THE PAST, CHARLES XAVIER AND I WERE RIVALS-- EVEN BITTER FOES-- BUT IT IS NOT OF HIM WE SPEAK.
IT IS THE CHILDREN.
THEIR NEED IS DESPERATE, MAGNETO. CAN YOU HELP THEM? EASE THEIR TRANSCENDENT MISERY?!
I CAN TRY.
I AM WILLING TO ADMIT THEM TO MY SCHOOL AND TEACH THEM AS XAVIER WOULD. I GIVE MY WORD NOT TO PRESSURE THEM TO JOIN THE HELLFIRE CLUB. I WILL SIMPLY REMOVE THEIR PAIN AND GIVE THEM THE OPPORTUNITY THEY DESERVE TO ENJOY A NORMAL LIFE.
IS THAT SO AWFUL?
IT WOULD BE AN ABOMINATION.
CAN YOU DO BETTER?
CAN YOU DO *ANYTHING?*
WHATEVER YOU DECIDE, IT WON'T BE YOU OR I WHO SUFFER FOR IT.
YOU'RE TRYING YOUR BEST, MAGNETO,-- BUT YOU'RE *FAILING!*
WILL YOU NOW SACRIFICE THE NEW MUTANTS ON THE ALTAR OF YOUR PRIDE?
GET OUT!
AS YOU WISH.
FOR NOW.

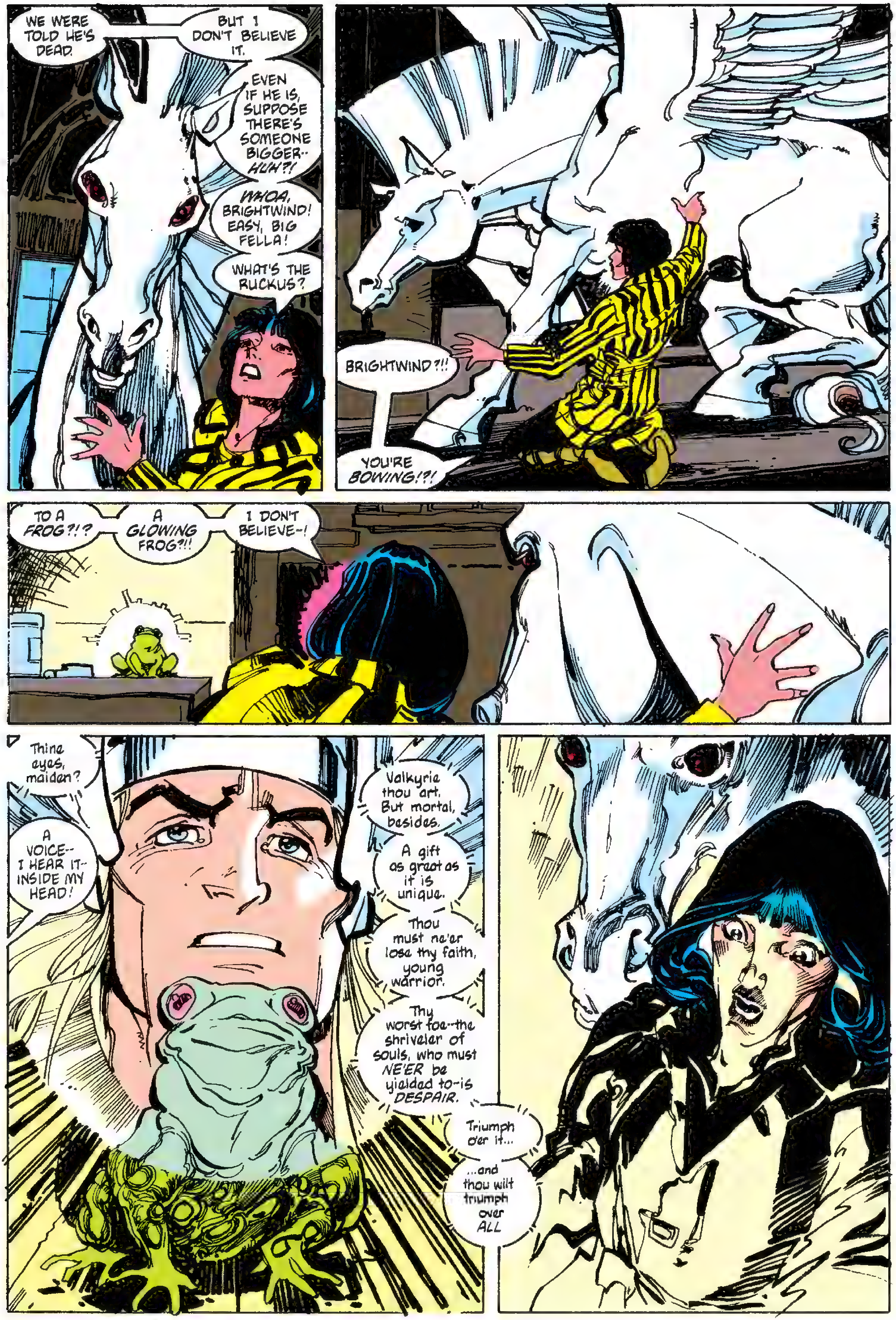

"HER MOCKING LAUGHTER ECHOES IN MY EARS THE FOLLOWING MORNING AS I MEET SAMUEL GUTHRIE--THE TEAM'S OTHER CO-LEADER--FOR HIS LESSON IN THE DANGER ROOM...
"...WHERE THE STUDENTS HONE AND PRACTICE THEIR PHYSICAL TALENTS, AND ESPECIALLY THEIR MUTANT POWERS...
THIS SESSION, CANNON-BALL...
...WILL CONCENTRATE ON YOUR MANEUVERABILITY.
WITH MY OWN MASTERY OF MAGNETISM, I SHALL ARRANGE THESE METAL HOOPS IN A SLALOM COURSE.
YOUR TASK WILL BE TO FLY THROUGH THEM.
YESSIR.
PROCEED, THEN.
"THE LAD BLASTS OFF LIKE A RUNAWAY ROCKET.
"WHEN USING HIS POWER...
"...CANNONBALL IS VIRTUALLY IMPERVIOUS TO HARM, AND TENDS TO PULVERIZE ANYTHING HE RUNS INTO.
"UNDER NORMAL CIRCUMSTANCES THOSE ABILITIES STAND HIM IN GOOD STEAD, BUT TODAY...
ENOUGH.
I AM VERY DISAPPOINTED, SAM. YOUR PERFORMANCE WAS WELL BELOW PAR--FAR LESS THAN YOU ARE CAPABLE OF, AS WELL AS WHAT YOU'VE DONE IN THE PAST.
HAVE YOU AN EXPLANATION?
NO, SIR.

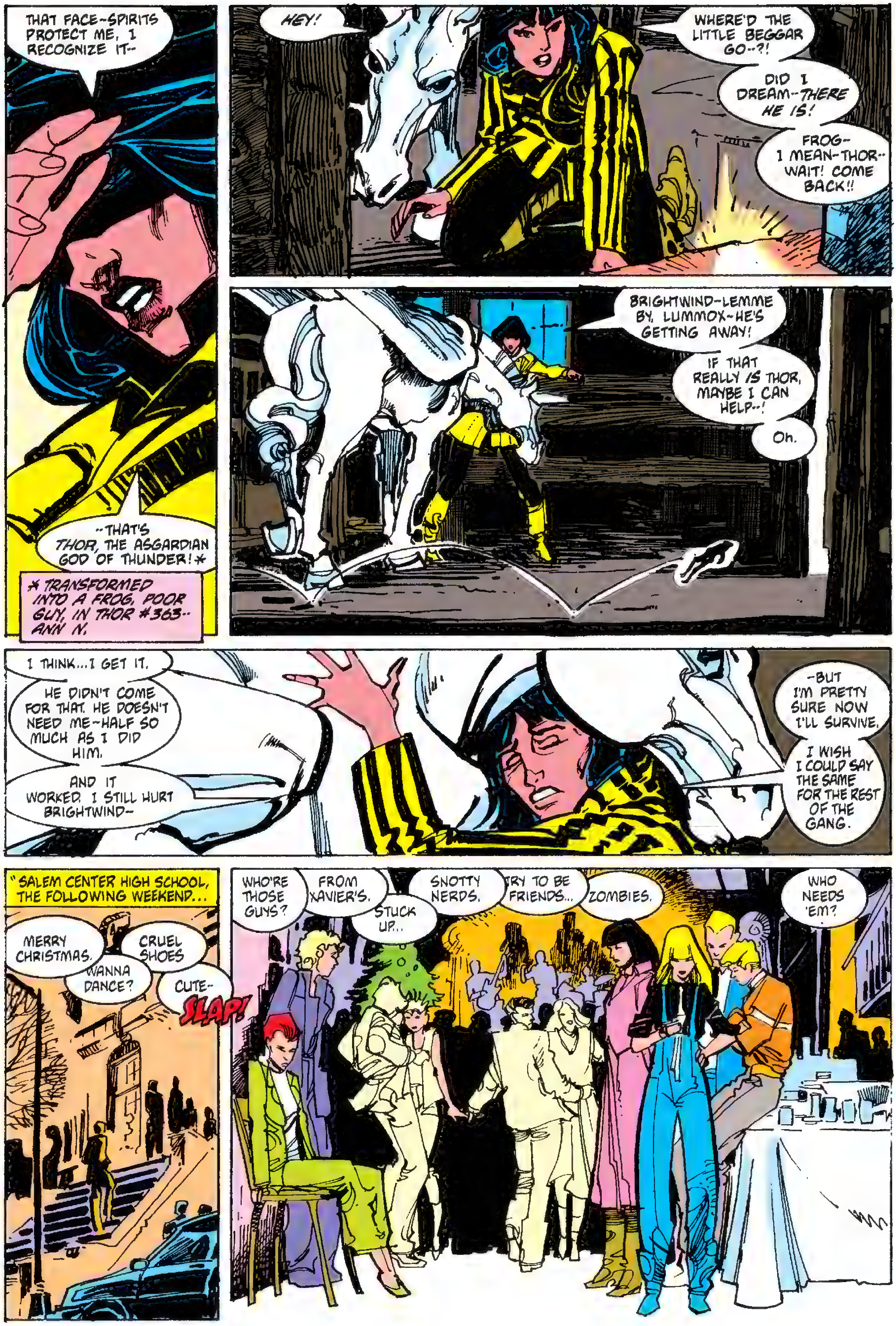

HE ISN'T INTERESTED. THE BOY COULDN'T CARE LESS.
I MIGHT AS WELL BE TALKING TO THE WALL.
I EXPECT BETTER OF YOU, SAM, AS YOU SHOULD, OF YOURSELF.
SORRY, SIR.
IS THAT ALL YOU HAVE TO SAY?
YESSIR.
SAM, WHAT IS WRONG?
I WANT TO HELP..!
NO NEED, SIR. EVERYTHING'S FINE.
REALLY?
SURE.
YOU AND DANIELLE ARE THE LEADERS OF THE NEW MUTANTS.. THE YOUNGER STUDENTS TURN TO YOU FOR GUIDANCE...
...AS I HOPE YOU MIGHT TURN TO ME.
OPEN YOUR EYES LAD--LOOK AT WHAT'S HAPPENING TO YOU ALL!
DOESN'T THAT CONCERN YOU?
DON'T YOU CARE?!
NOPE.
YOU AND THE OTHERS HAVE REGRESSED NEARLY TO THE LEVELS YOU ESTABLISHED WHEN YOU ENTERED THE SCHOOL. YOU'RE HURTING YOURSELVES, CANNONBALL, BY THIS BEHAVIOR--FAILING YOURSELVES!
ARE WE FINISHED, SIR? CAN AH GO?
RUN FIVE KILOMETERS ON THE TRACK, THEN, MEET ME IN THE CLASSROOM. YOUR ACADEMIC WORK LATELY HAS PROVEN EQUALLY UNSATISFACTORY.

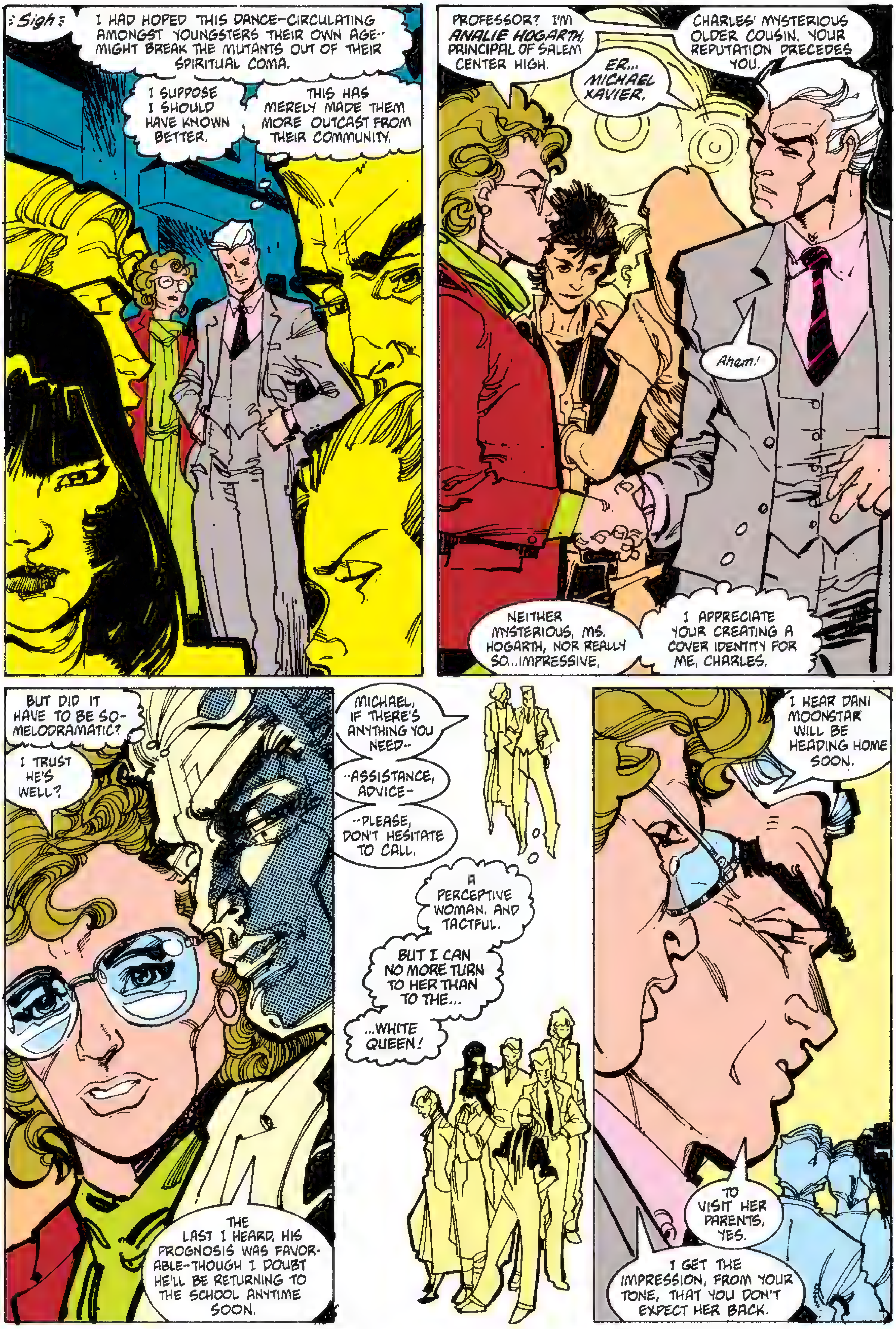

WRONG, ALL WRONG!
I MUST BE MORE CAREFUL, I BARELY HELD MY TEMPER.
BUT WHAT SHOULD I HAVE SAID--
--WHAT CAN I DO--
--TO REACH THE BOY?!
OR ANY OF THEM?!!
SOMETHING.. HAPPENED, CHARLES...
...DURING THE MUTANTS' LAST ENCOUNTER WITH THE BEYONDER.* BUT WHAT?!?
*LAST ISH--ANN N.
FAR SOONER THAN I ANTICIPATED, CHARLES...
I MUST PROVE MYSELF TRULY WORTHY OF THE TRUST YOU PLACED IN ME AS YOUR SUCCESSOR.
BUT I AM FAILING--AS THE WHITE QUEEN SAID, CURSE HER!
I AM NOT USED TO FEELING SUCH HELPLESSNESS. I DO NOT LIKE IT.
THERE MUST BE SOMETHING --EH?!
RAHNE, THIS CHOREOGRAPHY IS NOTHING NEW. THE MOVES SHOULD BE SECOND-NATURE TO THE LOT OF YOU.
YES, MISS HUNTER!
AGAIN, PEOPLE--FROM THE TOP.
AND THIS TIME GIVE IT A DECENT TRY.

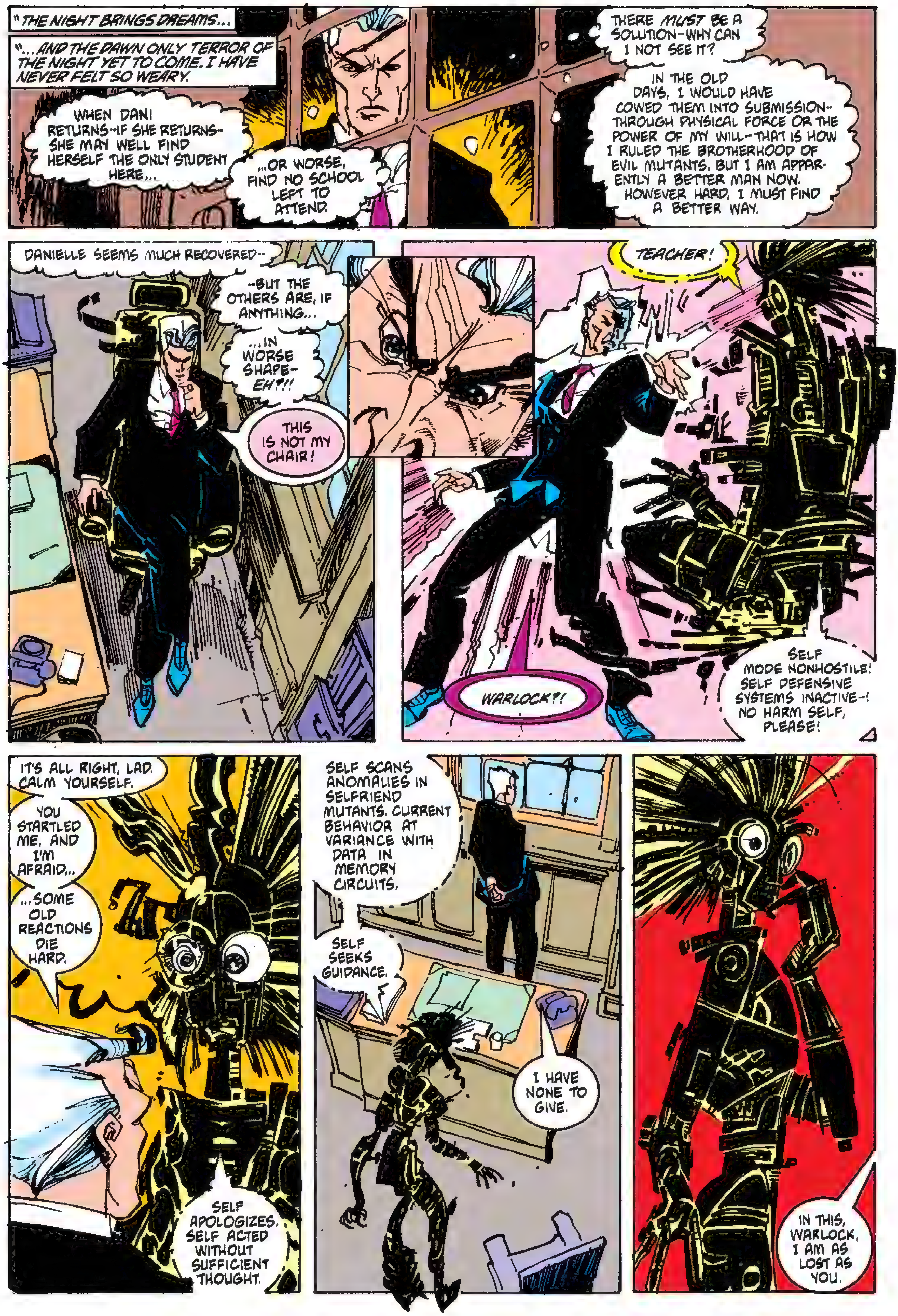

"DESPITE STEVIE HUNTER'S EXHORTATIONS, THERE IS NO IMPROVEMENT.
"HER PUPILS ARE LEADEN, FLAT-FOOTED, GRACELESS, JUST GOING THROUGH THE MOTIONS OF THIS DANCE CLASS...
"...AS THEY ARE OF LIFE.
"RAGE FLARES-- THE WORDS COME UNBIDDEN, I CANNOT HELP MYSELF AND DO NOT CARE..."
STUDENTS!
WHEN MS. HUNTER-- OR I, OR ANY TEACHER IN THIS SCHOOL--GIVES YOU AN ASSIGNMENT...
...YOU WILL EXECUTE IT, TO THE VERY BEST OF YOUR ABILITY!
IS THAT UNDERSTOOD?
NOW, PERFORM THE SEQUENCE AGAIN...
...AND THIS TIME, DO IT PROPERLY!
WHO NEEDS IT?
WHO CARES?
ILLYANA!
I'LL BE BACK WHEN I FEEL LIKE IT.
ARE YOU SATISFIED?
ILLYANA'S ZAPPED HERSELF TO LIMBO, AND, DESPITE YOUR TANTRUM, THE OTHERS ARE STILL AS LAME AS EVER!
WHAT'LL YOU TRY NEXT, PUNCHING THEM OUT?!
THIS IS MY CLASS, MAGNETO.
AND IF YOU'VE NO OBJECTIONS...
...I'D LIKE TO FINISH IT...
...WITHOUT ANY MORE IDIOT INTERFERENCE.

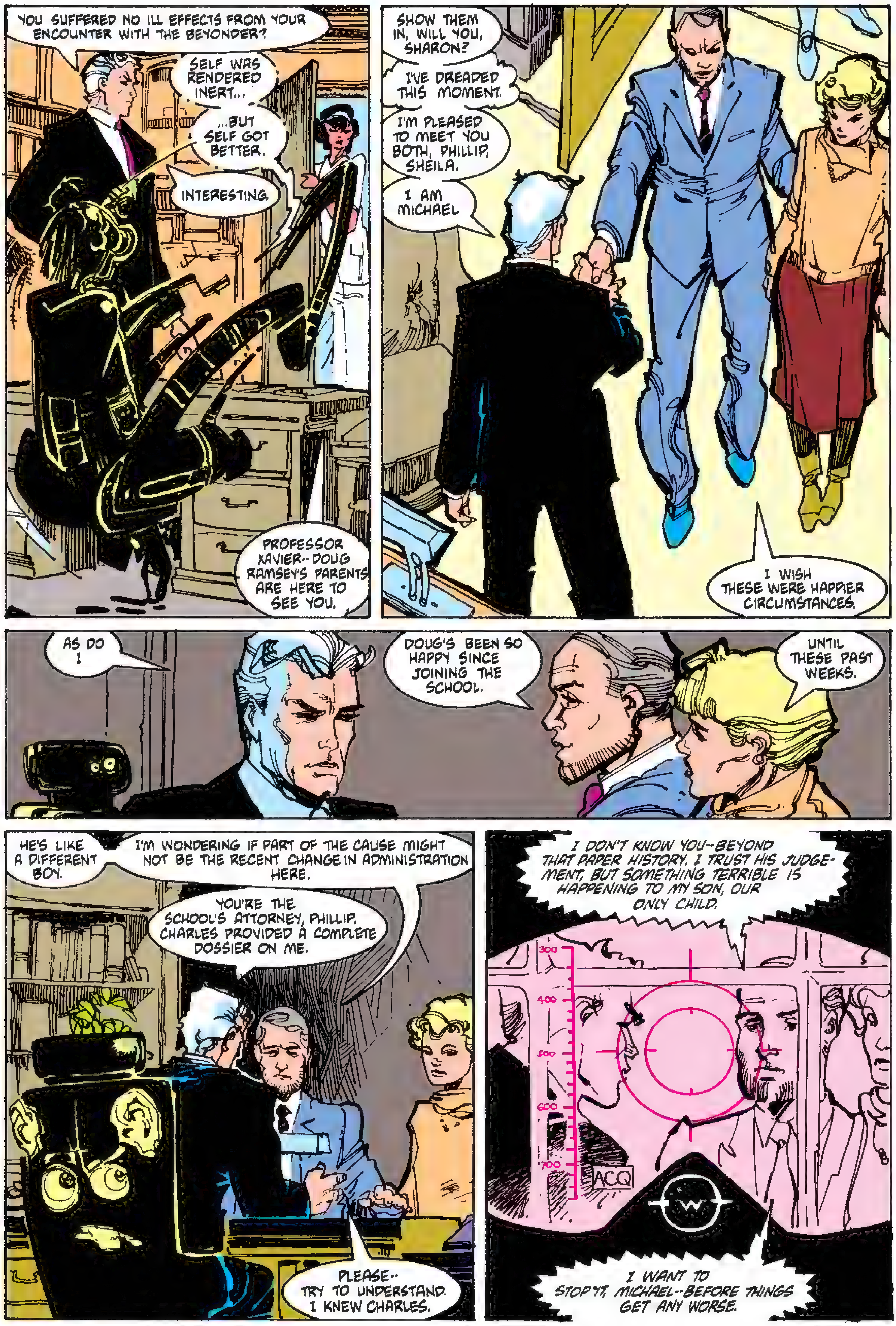

NOT FAR FROM THE MANSION STANDS ITS CARRIAGE HOUSE--WHICH HAS STOOD EMPTY AND UNTOUCHED FOR AGES, UNTIL DANIELLE MOONSTAR BROUGHT A WINGED STALLION, BRIGHTWIND, HOME WITH HER FROM THE NEW MUTANTS' RECENT ADVENTURE IN ASGARD.*
*NEW MUTANTS SPECIAL EDITION #1--A
REGARDLESS OF HOW DANI FEELS, BRIGHTWIND IS HER RESPONSIBILITY.
WHICH IS WHY SHE'S MUCKING HIS STALL, CHANGING WATER AND FEED, GROOMING HIM--MAKING HIM FEEL AS GOOD AS HE CAN BE...
...THOUGH SHE, HERSELF, FEELS NOTHING.
THAT IS, AT FIRST...
THEY-- DIED!
I WU-WATCHED THE BEYONDER KILL THEM BRIGHTWIND, ONE AFTER THE OTHER, AND THERE WAS NOTHING I COULD DO!
THEY WERE MY FRIENDS, THEY COUNTED ON ME--AND I FAILED!
THAT'S WHY, WHEN IT CAME MY TURN, I WAS GLAD, BECAUSE IT WAS THE PUNISHMENT I DESERVED. BECAUSE I WOULDN'T HAVE TO HURT ANYONE, KNOWING HOW I'D LET MY TEAMMATES DOWN.
BUT HE WOULDN'T LET US STAY DEAD.
SEE SECRET WARS II ISSUE #9.
HE BROUGHT US BACK--TO PLAY WITH US SOME MORE. AND HE LEFT US WITH THE MEMORY OF ALL THAT HAPPENED. WITH THE KNOWLEDGE... IT COULD...HAPPEN AGAIN.

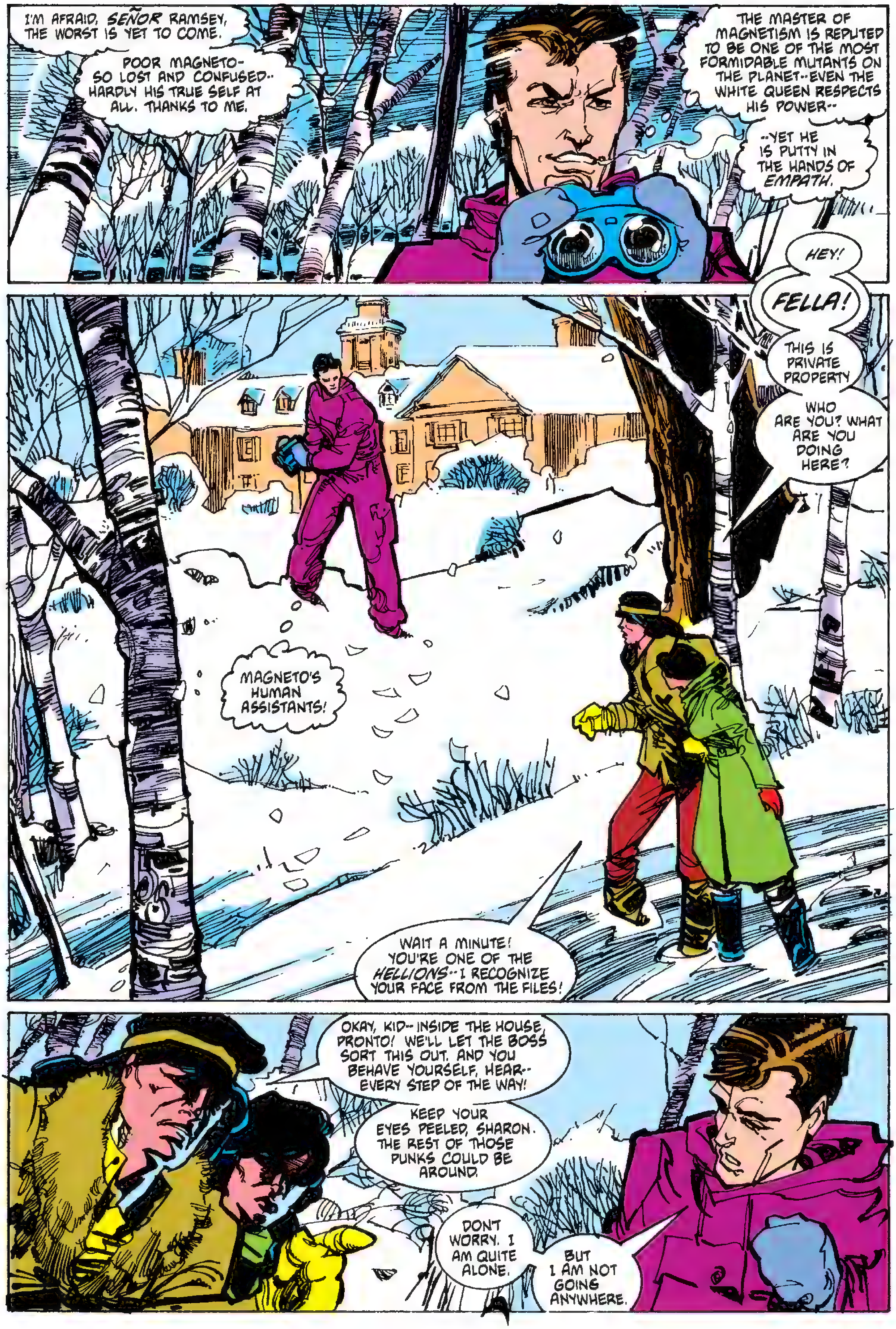

WE WERE TOLD HE'S DEAD.
BUT I DON'T BELIEVE IT.
EVEN IF HE IS, SUPPOSE THERE'S SOMEONE BIGGER-- *HUH?!*
WHOA, BRIGHTWIND! EASY, BIG FELLA!
WHAT'S THE RUCKUS?
BRIGHTWIND?!!
YOU'RE *BOWING!?!*
TO A *FROG?!?*
A *GLOWING* FROG?!!
I DON'T BELIEVE--!
Thine eyes, maiden?
A VOICE-- I HEAR IT-- INSIDE MY HEAD!
Valkyrie thou art. But mortal, besides.
A gift as great as it is unique.
Thou must ne'er lose thy faith, young warrior.
Thy worst foe--the shriveler of souls, who must *NE'ER* be yielded to--is *DESPAIR.*
Triumph o'er it...
...and thou wilt triumph over *ALL*

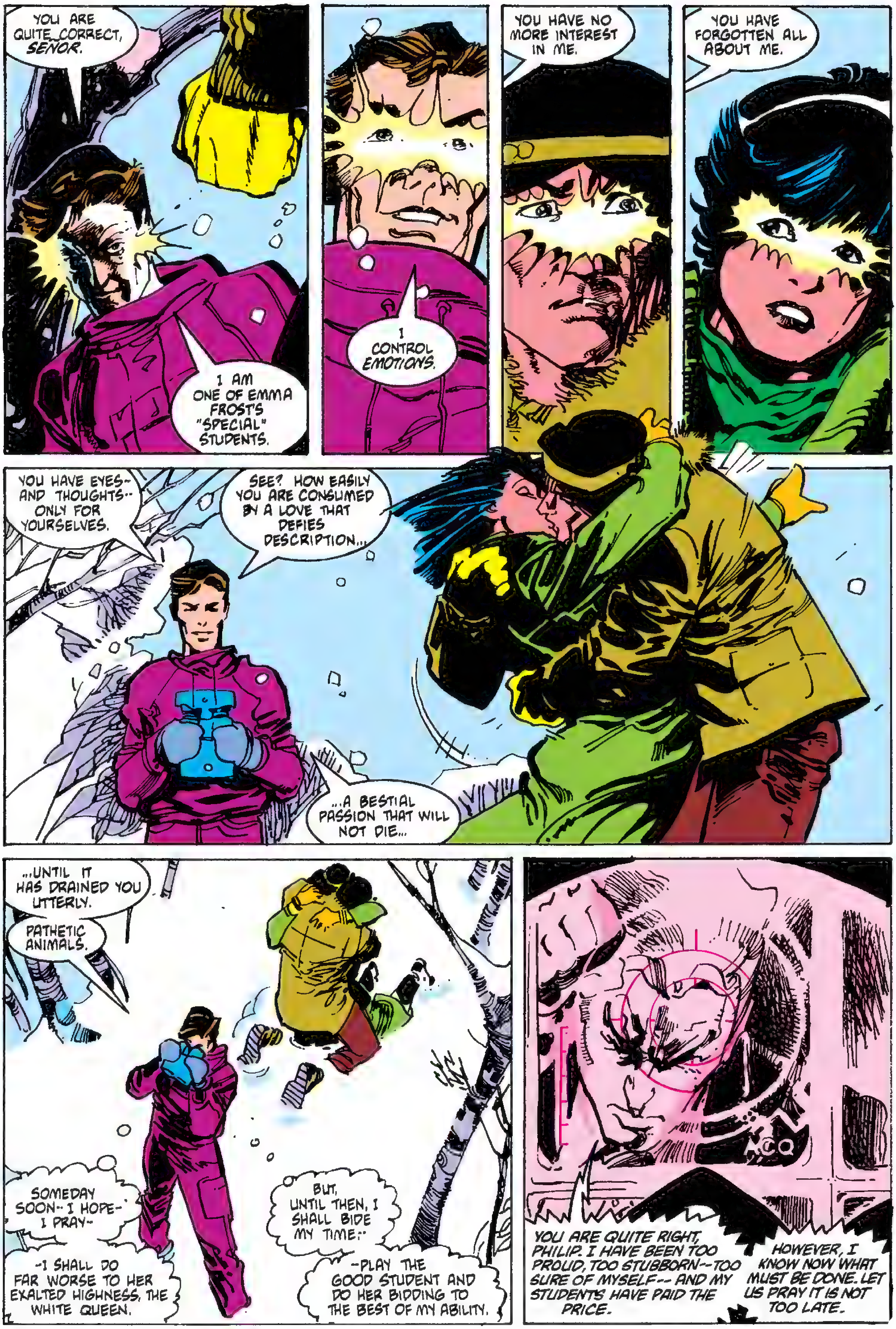

THAT FACE--SPIRITS PROTECT ME, I RECOGNIZE IT--
--THAT'S THOR, THE ASGARDIAN GOD OF THUNDER!*
* TRANSFORMED INTO A FROG, POOR GUY, IN THOR #363--ANN N.
HEY!
WHERE'D THE LITTLE BEGGAR GO--?!
DID I DREAM--THERE HE IS!
FROG--I MEAN--THOR--WAIT! COME BACK!!
BRIGHTWIND--LEMME BY, LUMMOX--HE'S GETTING AWAY!
IF THAT REALLY IS THOR, MAYBE I CAN HELP--!
Oh.
I THINK...I GET IT.
HE DIDN'T COME FOR THAT. HE DOESN'T NEED ME--HALF SO MUCH AS I DID HIM.
AND IT WORKED. I STILL HURT BRIGHTWIND--
--BUT I'M PRETTY SURE NOW I'LL SURVIVE.
I WISH I COULD SAY THE SAME FOR THE REST OF THE GANG.
SALEM CENTER HIGH SCHOOL, THE FOLLOWING WEEKEND...
MERRY CHRISTMAS.
CRUEL SHOES
WANNA DANCE?
CUTE--
SLAP!
WHO'RE THOSE GUYS?
FROM XAVIER'S.
STUCK UP...
SNOTTY NERDS.
TRY TO BE FRIENDS...
ZOMBIES.
WHO NEEDS 'EM?

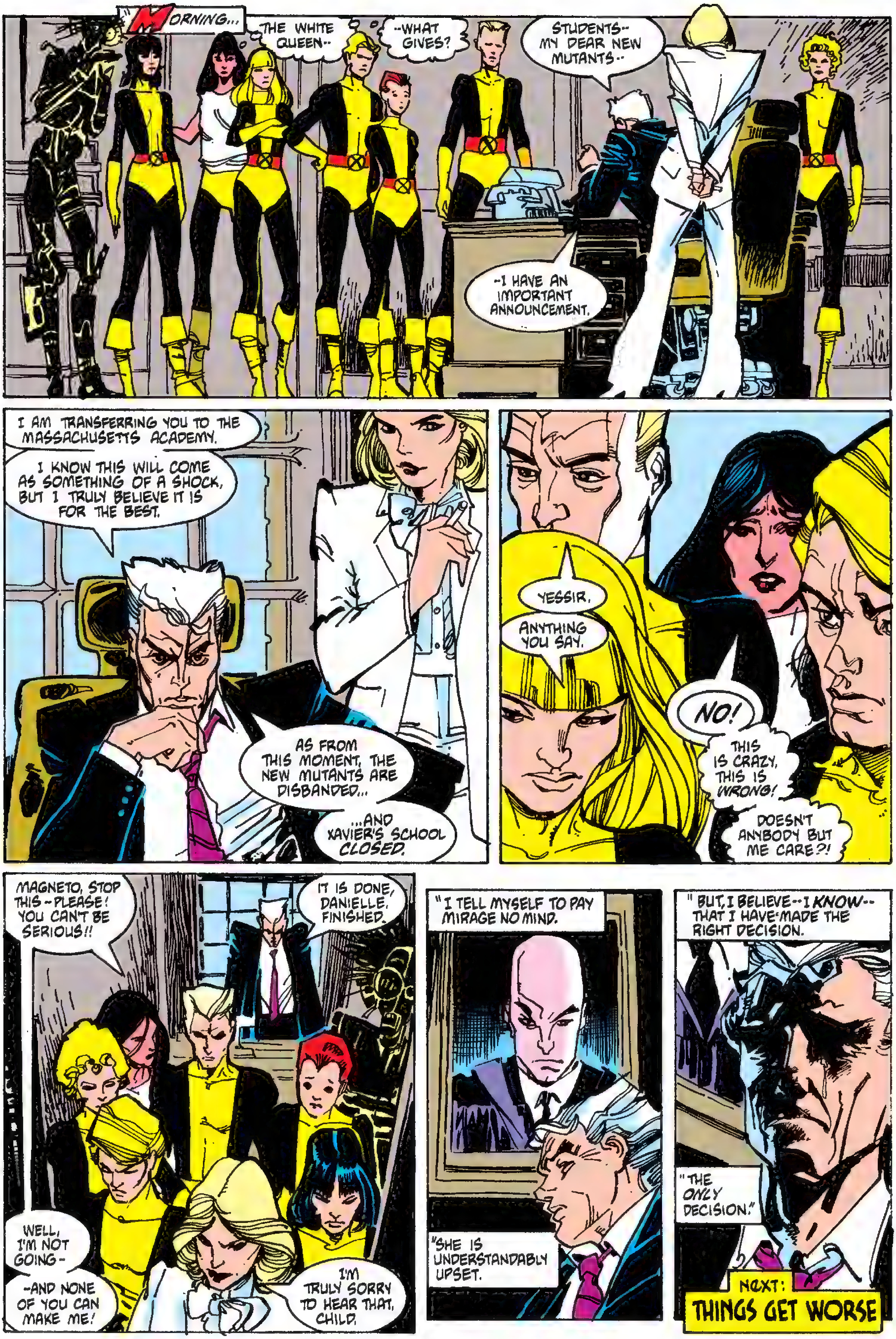

:Sigh:
I HAD HOPED THIS DANCE--CIRCULATING AMONGST YOUNGSTERS THEIR OWN AGE--MIGHT BREAK THE MUTANTS OUT OF THEIR SPIRITUAL COMA.
I SUPPOSE I SHOULD HAVE KNOWN BETTER.
THIS HAS MERELY MADE THEM MORE OUTCAST FROM THEIR COMMUNITY.
PROFESSOR? I'M ANALIE HOGARTH, PRINCIPAL OF SALEM CENTER HIGH.
ER... MICHAEL XAVIER.
CHARLES' MYSTERIOUS OLDER COUSIN. YOUR REPUTATION PRECEDES YOU.
Ahem!
NEITHER MYSTERIOUS, MS. HOGARTH, NOR REALLY SO...IMPRESSIVE.
I APPRECIATE YOUR CREATING A COVER IDENTITY FOR ME, CHARLES.
BUT DID IT HAVE TO BE SO--MELODRAMATIC?
I TRUST HE'S WELL?
THE LAST I HEARD, HIS PROGNOSIS WAS FAVORABLE--THOUGH I DOUBT HE'LL BE RETURNING TO THE SCHOOL ANYTIME SOON.
MICHAEL, IF THERE'S ANYTHING YOU NEED--
--ASSISTANCE, ADVICE--
--PLEASE, DON'T HESITATE TO CALL.
A PERCEPTIVE WOMAN. AND TACTFUL.
BUT I CAN NO MORE TURN TO HER THAN TO THE...
...WHITE QUEEN!
I HEAR DANI MOONSTAR WILL BE HEADING HOME SOON.
TO VISIT HER PARENTS, YES.
I GET THE IMPRESSION, FROM YOUR TONE, THAT YOU DON'T EXPECT HER BACK.


"THE NIGHT BRINGS DREAMS...
"...AND THE DAWN ONLY TERROR OF THE NIGHT YET TO COME. I HAVE NEVER FELT SO WEARY.
WHEN DANI RETURNS--IF SHE RETURNS--SHE MAY WELL FIND HERSELF THE ONLY STUDENT HERE...
...OR WORSE, FIND NO SCHOOL LEFT TO ATTEND.
THERE MUST BE A SOLUTION--WHY CAN I NOT SEE IT?
IN THE OLD DAYS, I WOULD HAVE COWED THEM INTO SUBMISSION--THROUGH PHYSICAL FORCE OR THE POWER OF MY WILL--THAT IS HOW I RULED THE BROTHERHOOD OF EVIL MUTANTS. BUT I AM APPARENTLY A BETTER MAN NOW. HOWEVER HARD, I MUST FIND A BETTER WAY.
DANIELLE SEEMS MUCH RECOVERED--
--BUT THE OTHERS ARE, IF ANYTHING...
...IN WORSE SHAPE--EH?!!
THIS IS NOT MY CHAIR!
TEACHER!
WARLOCK?!
SELF MODE NONHOSTILE! SELF DEFENSIVE SYSTEMS INACTIVE--! NO HARM SELF, PLEASE!
IT'S ALL RIGHT, LAD. CALM YOURSELF.
YOU STARTLED ME, AND I'M AFRAID...
...SOME OLD REACTIONS DIE HARD.
SELF APOLOGIZES. SELF ACTED WITHOUT SUFFICIENT THOUGHT.
SELF SCANS ANOMALIES IN SELFRIEND MUTANTS. CURRENT BEHAVIOR AT VARIANCE WITH DATA IN MEMORY CIRCUITS.
SELF SEEKS GUIDANCE.
I HAVE NONE TO GIVE.
IN THIS, WARLOCK, I AM AS LOST AS YOU.


YOU SUFFERED NO ILL EFFECTS FROM YOUR ENCOUNTER WITH THE BEYONDER?
SELF WAS RENDERED INERT...
...BUT SELF GOT BETTER.
INTERESTING.
PROFESSOR XAVIER--DOUG RAMSEY'S PARENTS ARE HERE TO SEE YOU.
SHOW THEM IN, WILL YOU, SHARON?
I'VE DREADED THIS MOMENT.
I'M PLEASED TO MEET YOU BOTH, PHILLIP, SHEILA.
I AM MICHAEL
I WISH THESE WERE HAPPIER CIRCUMSTANCES.
AS DO I
DOUG'S BEEN SO HAPPY SINCE JOINING THE SCHOOL.
UNTIL THESE PAST WEEKS.
HE'S LIKE A DIFFERENT BOY.
I'M WONDERING IF PART OF THE CAUSE MIGHT NOT BE THE RECENT CHANGE IN ADMINISTRATION HERE.
YOU'RE THE SCHOOL'S ATTORNEY, PHILLIP. CHARLES PROVIDED A COMPLETE DOSSIER ON ME.
PLEASE-- TRY TO UNDERSTAND. I KNEW CHARLES.
I DON'T KNOW YOU--BEYOND THAT PAPER HISTORY. I TRUST HIS JUDGEMENT, BUT SOMETHING TERRIBLE IS HAPPENING TO MY SON, OUR ONLY CHILD.
300
400
500
600
700
ACQ
W
I WANT TO STOP IT, MICHAEL--BEFORE THINGS GET ANY WORSE.


I'M AFRAID, *SEÑOR* RAMSEY, THE WORST IS YET TO COME.
POOR MAGNETO-- SO LOST AND CONFUSED.. HARDLY HIS TRUE SELF AT ALL. THANKS TO ME.
THE MASTER OF MAGNETISM IS REPUTED TO BE ONE OF THE MOST FORMIDABLE MUTANTS ON THE PLANET--EVEN THE WHITE QUEEN RESPECTS HIS POWER--
--YET HE IS PUTTY IN THE HANDS OF *EMPATH*.
HEY!
FELLA!
THIS IS PRIVATE PROPERTY.
WHO ARE YOU? WHAT ARE YOU DOING HERE?
MAGNETO'S HUMAN ASSISTANTS!
WAIT A MINUTE! YOU'RE ONE OF THE *HELLIONS*--I RECOGNIZE YOUR FACE FROM THE FILES!
OKAY, KID--INSIDE THE HOUSE, PRONTO! WE'LL LET THE BOSS SORT THIS OUT. AND YOU BEHAVE YOURSELF, HEAR--EVERY STEP OF THE WAY!
KEEP YOUR EYES PEELED, SHARON. THE REST OF THOSE PUNKS COULD BE AROUND.
DON'T WORRY. I AM QUITE ALONE.
BUT I AM NOT GOING ANYWHERE.


YOU ARE QUITE CORRECT, SEÑOR.
I AM ONE OF EMMA FROST'S "SPECIAL" STUDENTS.
I CONTROL EMOTIONS.
YOU HAVE NO MORE INTEREST IN ME.
YOU HAVE FORGOTTEN ALL ABOUT ME.
YOU HAVE EYES--AND THOUGHTS--ONLY FOR YOURSELVES.
SEE? HOW EASILY YOU ARE CONSUMED BY A LOVE THAT DEFIES DESCRIPTION...
...A BESTIAL PASSION THAT WILL NOT DIE...
...UNTIL IT HAS DRAINED YOU UTTERLY.
PATHETIC ANIMALS.
SOMEDAY SOON--I HOPE--I PRAY--
--I SHALL DO FAR WORSE TO HER EXALTED HIGHNESS, THE WHITE QUEEN.
BUT, UNTIL THEN, I SHALL BIDE MY TIME--
--PLAY THE GOOD STUDENT AND DO HER BIDDING TO THE BEST OF MY ABILITY.
YOU ARE QUITE RIGHT, PHILIP. I HAVE BEEN TOO PROUD, TOO STUBBORN--TOO SURE OF MYSELF--AND MY STUDENTS HAVE PAID THE PRICE.
HOWEVER, I KNOW NOW WHAT MUST BE DONE. LET US PRAY IT IS NOT TOO LATE.


MORNING...
THE WHITE QUEEN--
--WHAT GIVES?
STUDENTS-- MY DEAR NEW MUTANTS--
--I HAVE AN IMPORTANT ANNOUNCEMENT.
I AM TRANSFERRING YOU TO THE MASSACHUSETTS ACADEMY.
I KNOW THIS WILL COME AS SOMETHING OF A SHOCK, BUT I TRULY BELIEVE IT IS FOR THE BEST.
AS FROM THIS MOMENT, THE NEW MUTANTS ARE DISBANDED...
...AND XAVIER'S SCHOOL CLOSED.
YESSIR.
ANYTHING YOU SAY.
NO!
THIS IS CRAZY, THIS IS WRONG!
DOESN'T ANYBODY BUT ME CARE?!
MAGNETO, STOP THIS--PLEASE! YOU CAN'T BE SERIOUS!!
IT IS DONE, DANIELLE. FINISHED.
WELL, I'M NOT GOING--
--AND NONE OF YOU CAN MAKE ME!
I'M TRULY SORRY TO HEAR THAT, CHILD.
"I TELL MYSELF TO PAY MIRAGE NO MIND.
"SHE IS UNDERSTANDABLY UPSET.
"BUT, I BELIEVE--I KNOW--THAT I HAVE MADE THE RIGHT DECISION.
"THE ONLY DECISION."
NEXT: THINGS GET WORSE

THE · NEW
MUTANTS
HELLIONS
MARVEL®
25TH
ANNIVERSARY
OHHH!
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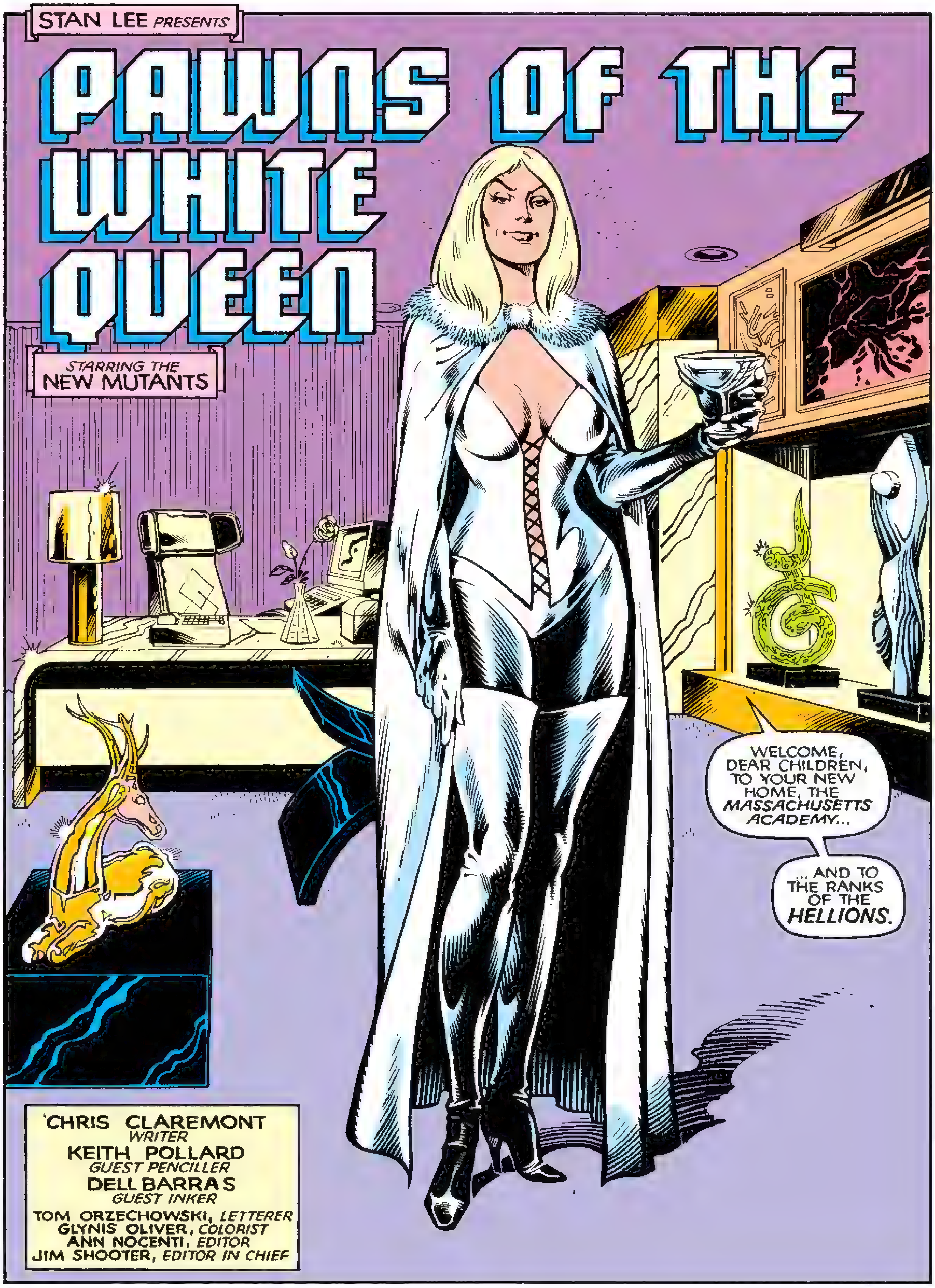
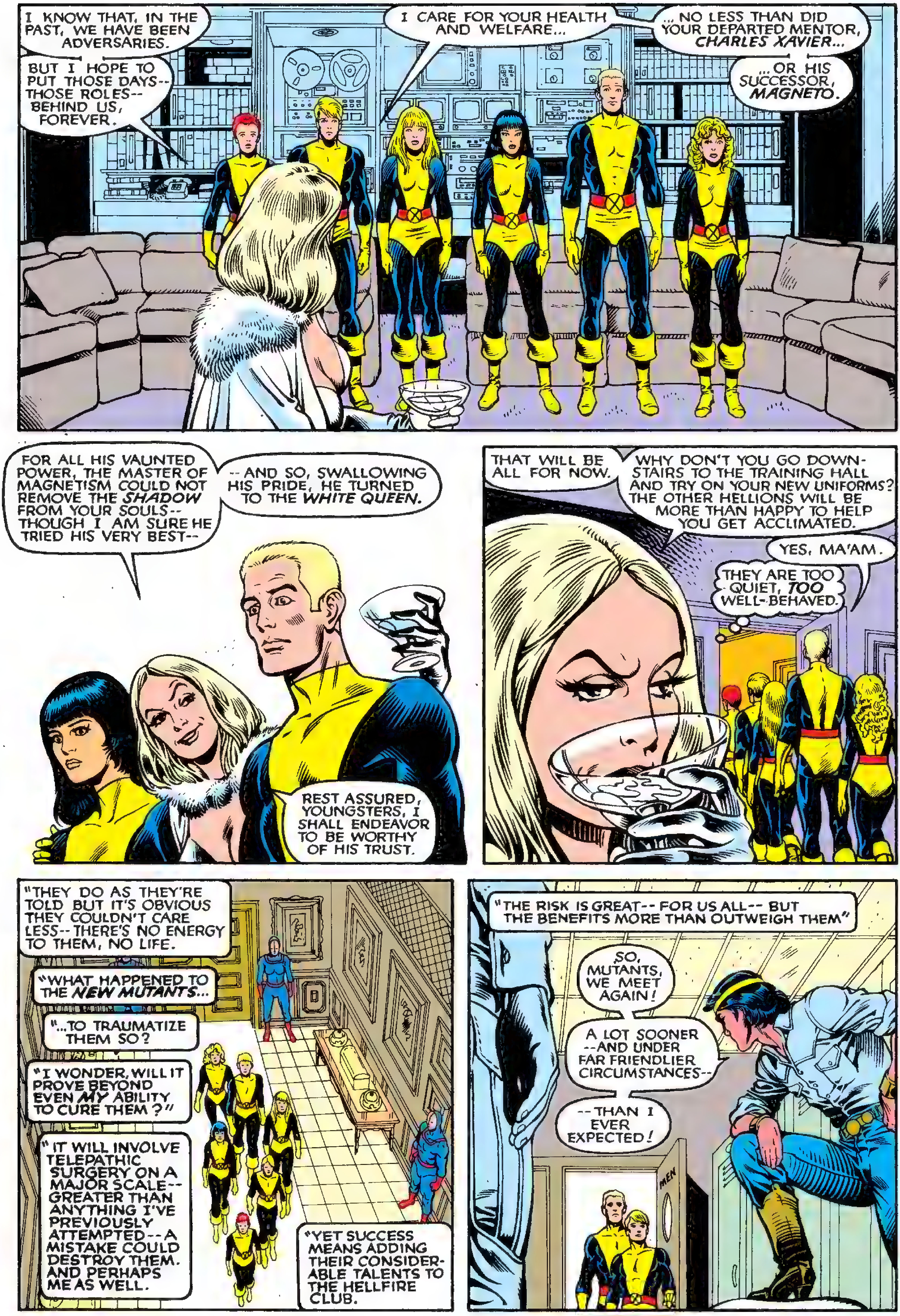
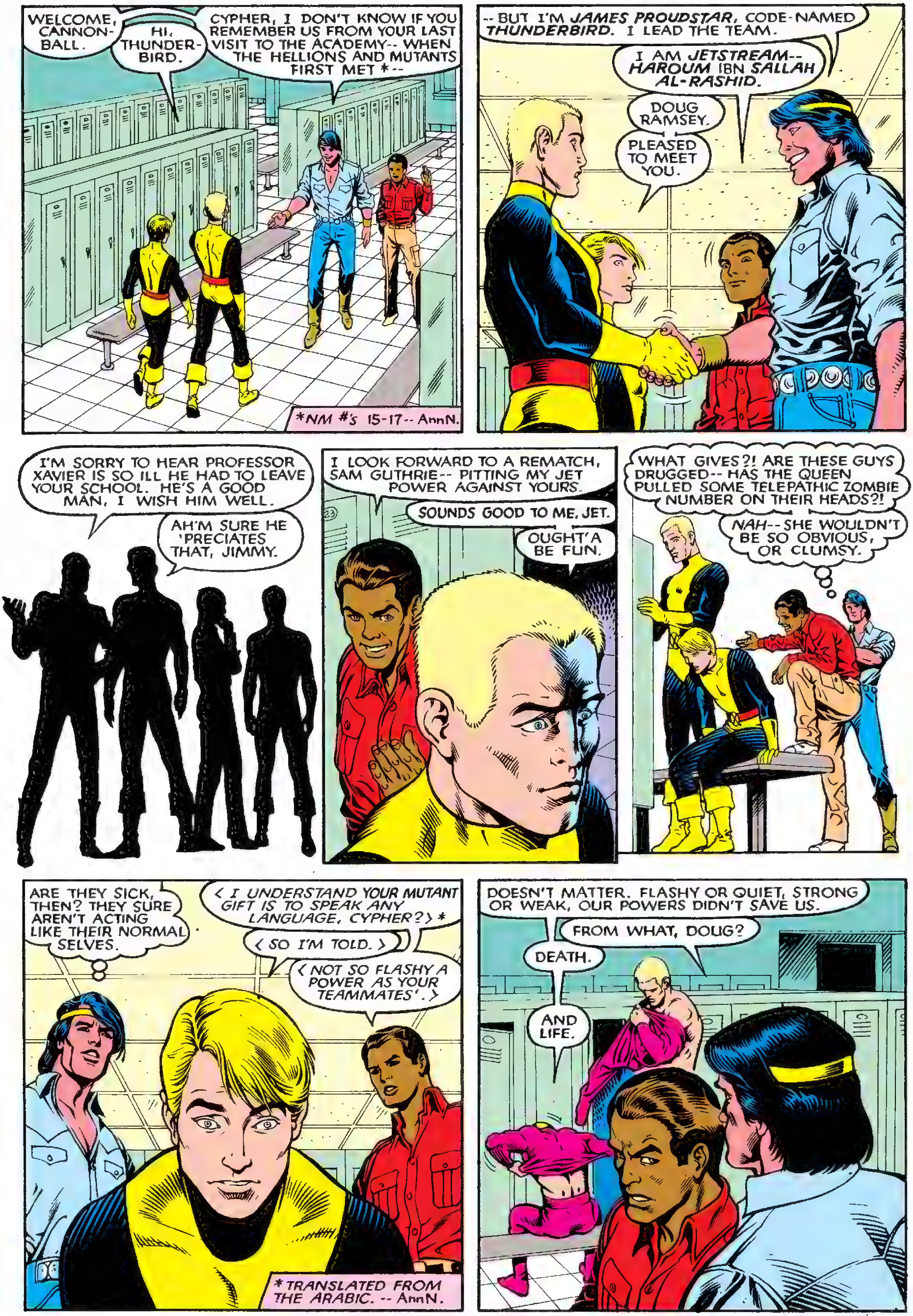
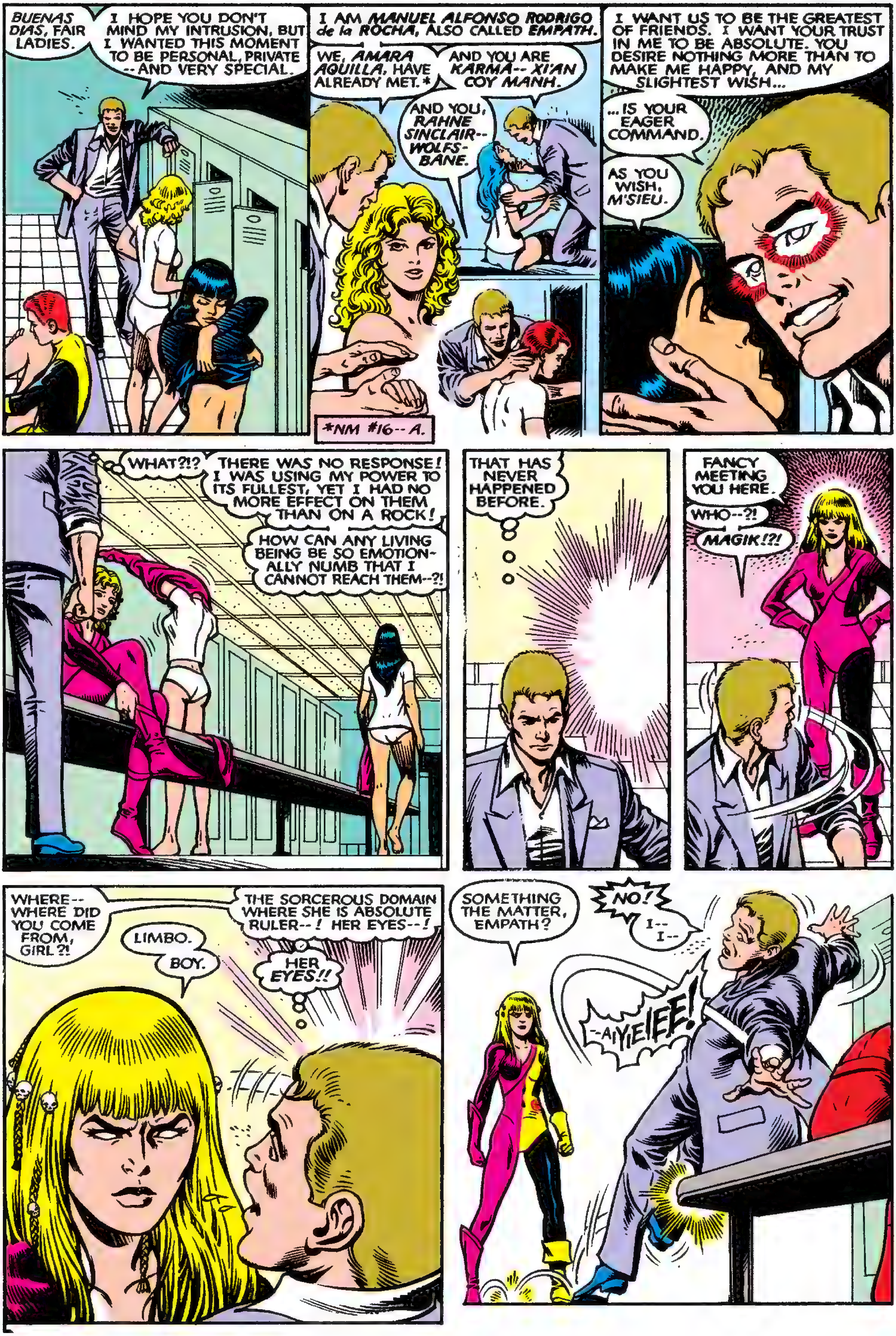
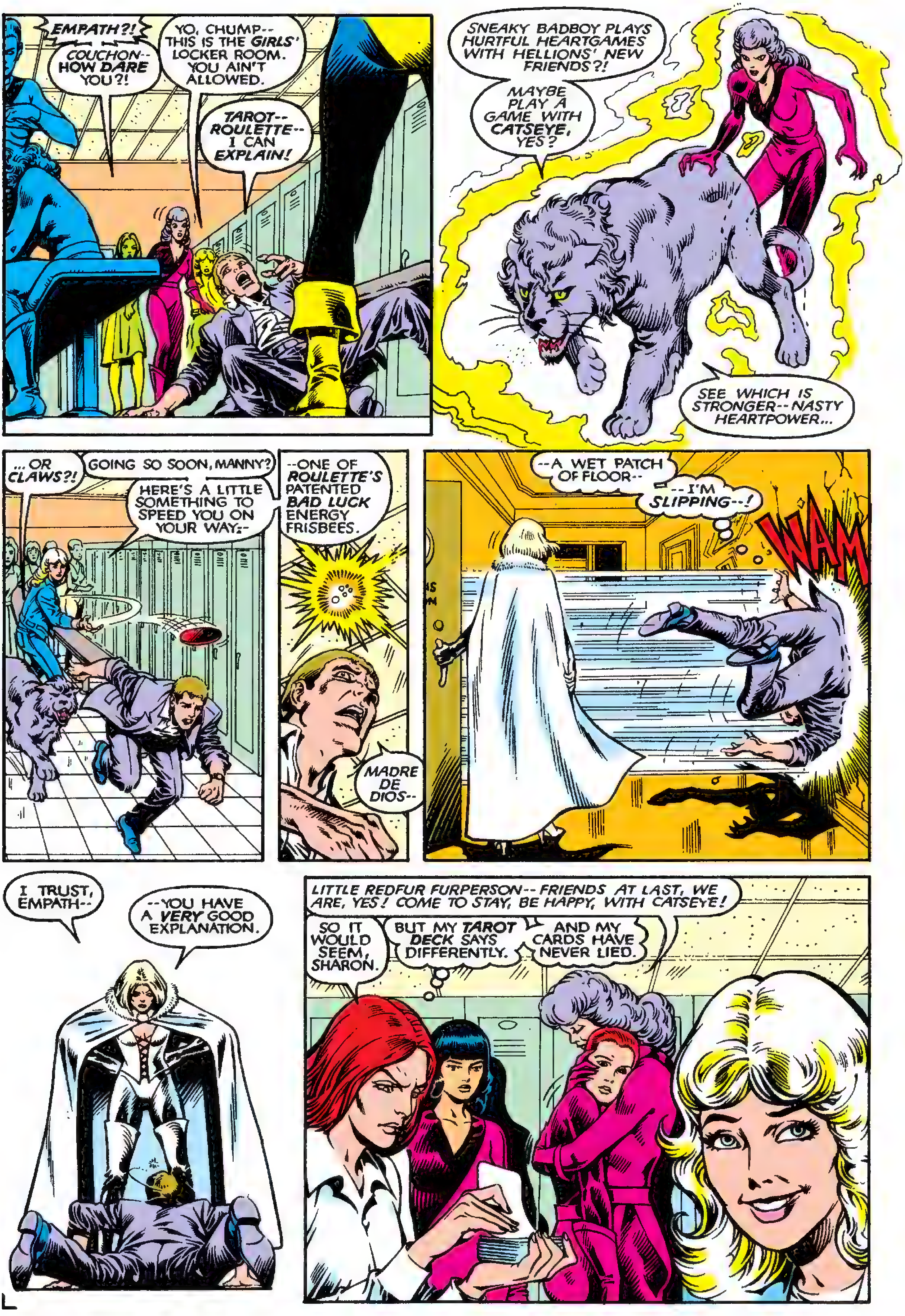
10 85
BILL SIENKIEWICZ

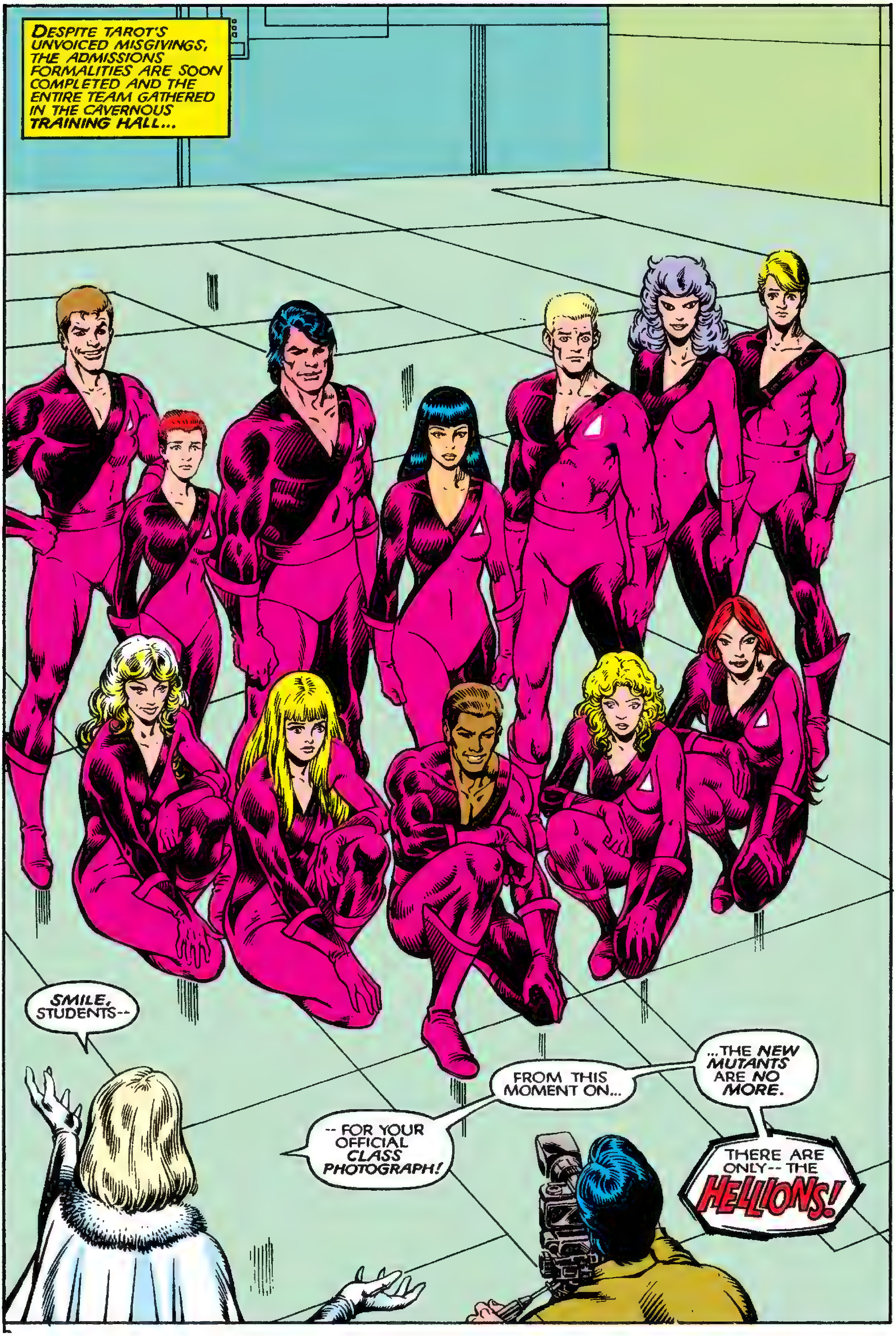

STAN LEE PRESENTS
PAWNS OF THE WHITE QUEEN
STARRING THE NEW MUTANTS
WELCOME, DEAR CHILDREN, TO YOUR NEW HOME, THE *MASSACHUSETTS ACADEMY*...
... AND TO THE RANKS OF THE *HELLIONS*.
CHRIS CLAREMONT *WRITER*
KEITH POLLARD *GUEST PENCILLER*
DELL BARRAS *GUEST INKER*
TOM ORZECHOWSKI, *LETTERER*
GLYNIS OLIVER, *COLORIST*
ANN NOCENTI, *EDITOR*
JIM SHOOTER, *EDITOR IN CHIEF*

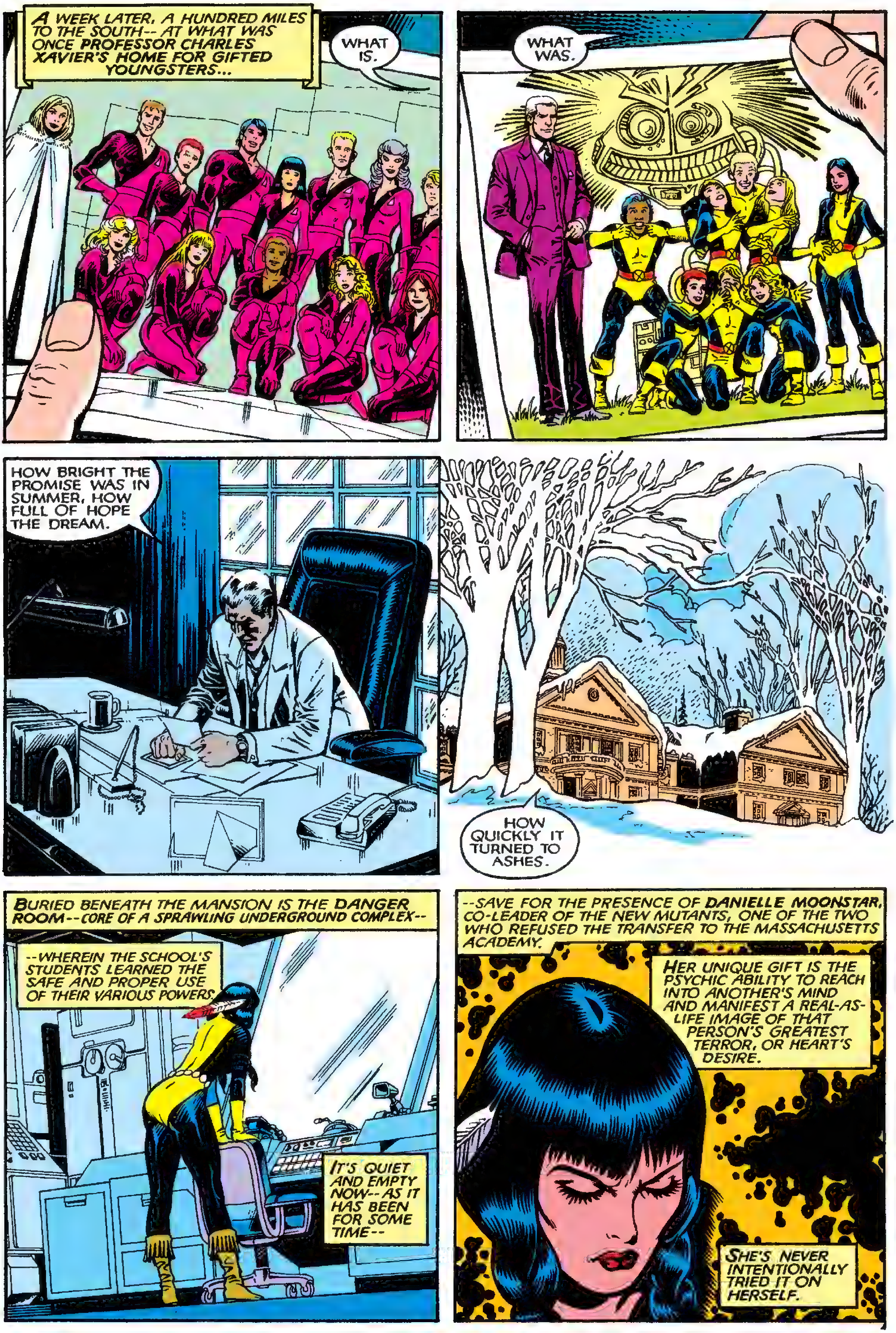

I KNOW THAT, IN THE PAST, WE HAVE BEEN ADVERSARIES.
BUT I HOPE TO PUT THOSE DAYS--THOSE ROLES--BEHIND US, FOREVER.
I CARE FOR YOUR HEALTH AND WELFARE...
...NO LESS THAN DID YOUR DEPARTED MENTOR, *CHARLES XAVIER*...
...OR HIS SUCCESSOR, *MAGNETO*.
FOR ALL HIS VAUNTED POWER, THE MASTER OF MAGNETISM COULD NOT REMOVE THE *SHADOW* FROM YOUR SOULS--THOUGH I AM SURE HE TRIED HIS VERY BEST--
--AND SO, SWALLOWING HIS PRIDE, HE TURNED TO THE *WHITE QUEEN*.
REST ASSURED, YOUNGSTERS, I SHALL ENDEAVOR TO BE WORTHY OF HIS TRUST.
THAT WILL BE ALL FOR NOW.
WHY DON'T YOU GO DOWNSTAIRS TO THE TRAINING HALL AND TRY ON YOUR NEW UNIFORMS? THE OTHER HELLIONS WILL BE MORE THAN HAPPY TO HELP YOU GET ACCLIMATED.
YES, MA'AM.
THEY ARE TOO QUIET, *TOO* WELL-BEHAVED.
"THEY DO AS THEY'RE TOLD BUT IT'S OBVIOUS THEY COULDN'T CARE LESS--THERE'S NO ENERGY TO THEM, NO LIFE.
"WHAT HAPPENED TO THE *NEW MUTANTS*...
"...TO TRAUMATIZE THEM SO?
"I WONDER, WILL IT PROVE BEYOND EVEN *MY* ABILITY TO CURE THEM?"
"IT WILL INVOLVE TELEPATHIC SURGERY ON A MAJOR SCALE--GREATER THAN ANYTHING I'VE PREVIOUSLY ATTEMPTED--A MISTAKE COULD DESTROY THEM. AND PERHAPS ME AS WELL.
"YET SUCCESS MEANS ADDING THEIR CONSIDERABLE TALENTS TO THE HELLFIRE CLUB.
"THE RISK IS GREAT--FOR US ALL--BUT THE BENEFITS MORE THAN OUTWEIGH THEM"
SO, MUTANTS, WE MEET AGAIN!
A LOT SOONER--AND UNDER FAR FRIENDLIER CIRCUMSTANCES--
--THAN I EVER EXPECTED!
MEN

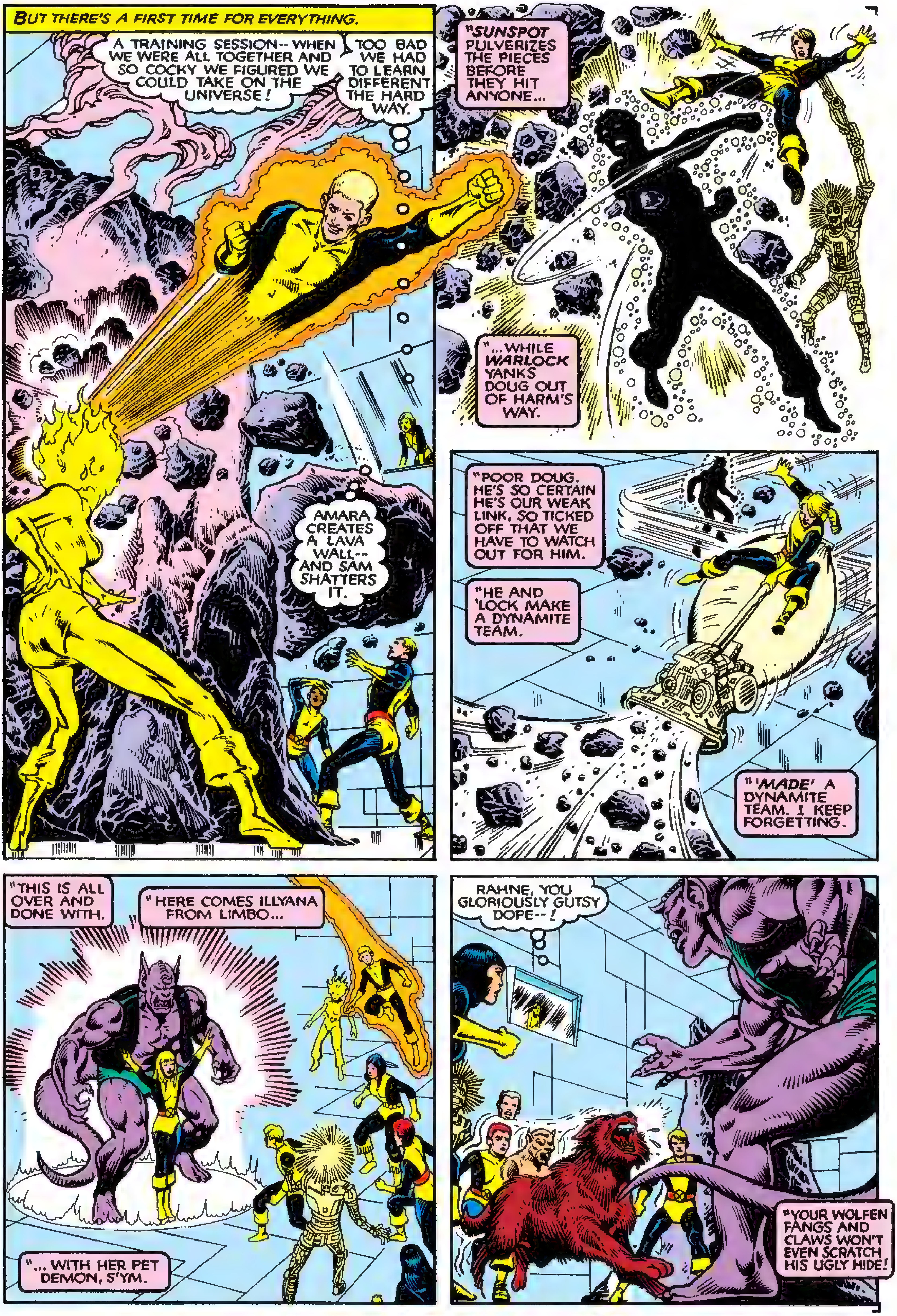

WELCOME, CANNONBALL.
HI, THUNDERBIRD.
CYPHER, I DON'T KNOW IF YOU REMEMBER US FROM YOUR LAST VISIT TO THE ACADEMY-- WHEN THE HELLIONS AND MUTANTS FIRST MET *--
*NM #'s 15-17-- AnnN.
-- BUT I'M JAMES PROUDSTAR, CODE-NAMED THUNDERBIRD. I LEAD THE TEAM.
I AM JETSTREAM-- HAROUM IBN SALLAH AL-RASHID.
DOUG RAMSEY.
PLEASED TO MEET YOU.
I'M SORRY TO HEAR PROFESSOR XAVIER IS SO ILL HE HAD TO LEAVE YOUR SCHOOL. HE'S A GOOD MAN. I WISH HIM WELL.
AH'M SURE HE 'PRECIATES THAT, JIMMY.
I LOOK FORWARD TO A REMATCH, SAM GUTHRIE-- PITTING MY JET POWER AGAINST YOURS.
SOUNDS GOOD TO ME, JET.
OUGHT'A BE FUN.
WHAT GIVES?! ARE THESE GUYS DRUGGED-- HAS THE QUEEN PULLED SOME TELEPATHIC ZOMBIE NUMBER ON THEIR HEADS?!
NAH-- SHE WOULDN'T BE SO OBVIOUS, OR CLUMSY.
ARE THEY SICK, THEN? THEY SURE AREN'T ACTING LIKE THEIR NORMAL SELVES.
‹ I UNDERSTAND YOUR MUTANT GIFT IS TO SPEAK ANY LANGUAGE, CYPHER? › *
‹ SO I'M TOLD. ›
‹ NOT SO FLASHY A POWER AS YOUR TEAMMATES'. ›
*TRANSLATED FROM THE ARABIC. -- AnnN.
DOESN'T MATTER. FLASHY OR QUIET, STRONG OR WEAK, OUR POWERS DIDN'T SAVE US.
FROM WHAT, DOUG?
DEATH.
AND LIFE.

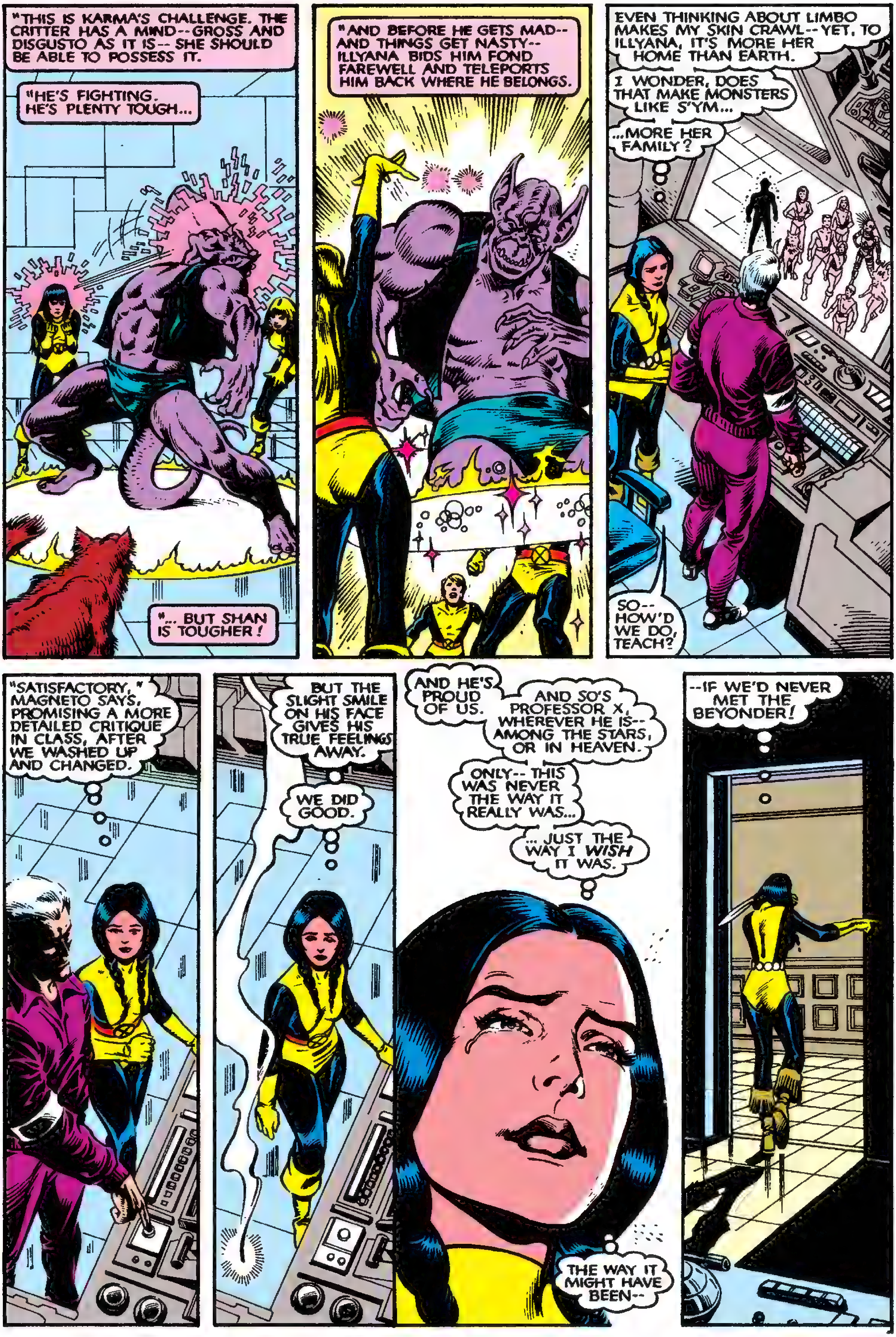

BUENAS DIAS, FAIR LADIES.
I HOPE YOU DON'T MIND MY INTRUSION, BUT I WANTED THIS MOMENT TO BE PERSONAL, PRIVATE --AND VERY SPECIAL.
I AM MANUEL ALFONSO RODRIGO de la ROCHA, ALSO CALLED EMPATH.
WE, AMARA AQUILLA, HAVE ALREADY MET.*
AND YOU ARE KARMA-- XI'AN COY MANH.
AND YOU, RAHNE SINCLAIR-- WOLFSBANE.
*NM #16-- A.
I WANT US TO BE THE GREATEST OF FRIENDS. I WANT YOUR TRUST IN ME TO BE ABSOLUTE. YOU DESIRE NOTHING MORE THAN TO MAKE ME HAPPY, AND MY SLIGHTEST WISH...
...IS YOUR EAGER COMMAND.
AS YOU WISH, M'SIEU.
WHAT?!?
THERE WAS NO RESPONSE! I WAS USING MY POWER TO ITS FULLEST, YET I HAD NO MORE EFFECT ON THEM THAN ON A ROCK!
HOW CAN ANY LIVING BEING BE SO EMOTIONALLY NUMB THAT I CANNOT REACH THEM--?!
THAT HAS NEVER HAPPENED BEFORE.
FANCY MEETING YOU HERE.
WHO--?!
MAGIK!?!
WHERE-- WHERE DID YOU COME FROM, GIRL?!
LIMBO.
BOY.
THE SORCEROUS DOMAIN WHERE SHE IS ABSOLUTE RULER--! HER EYES--!
HER EYES!!
SOMETHING THE MATTER, EMPATH?
NO!
I-- I--
--AIYIEIEEE!

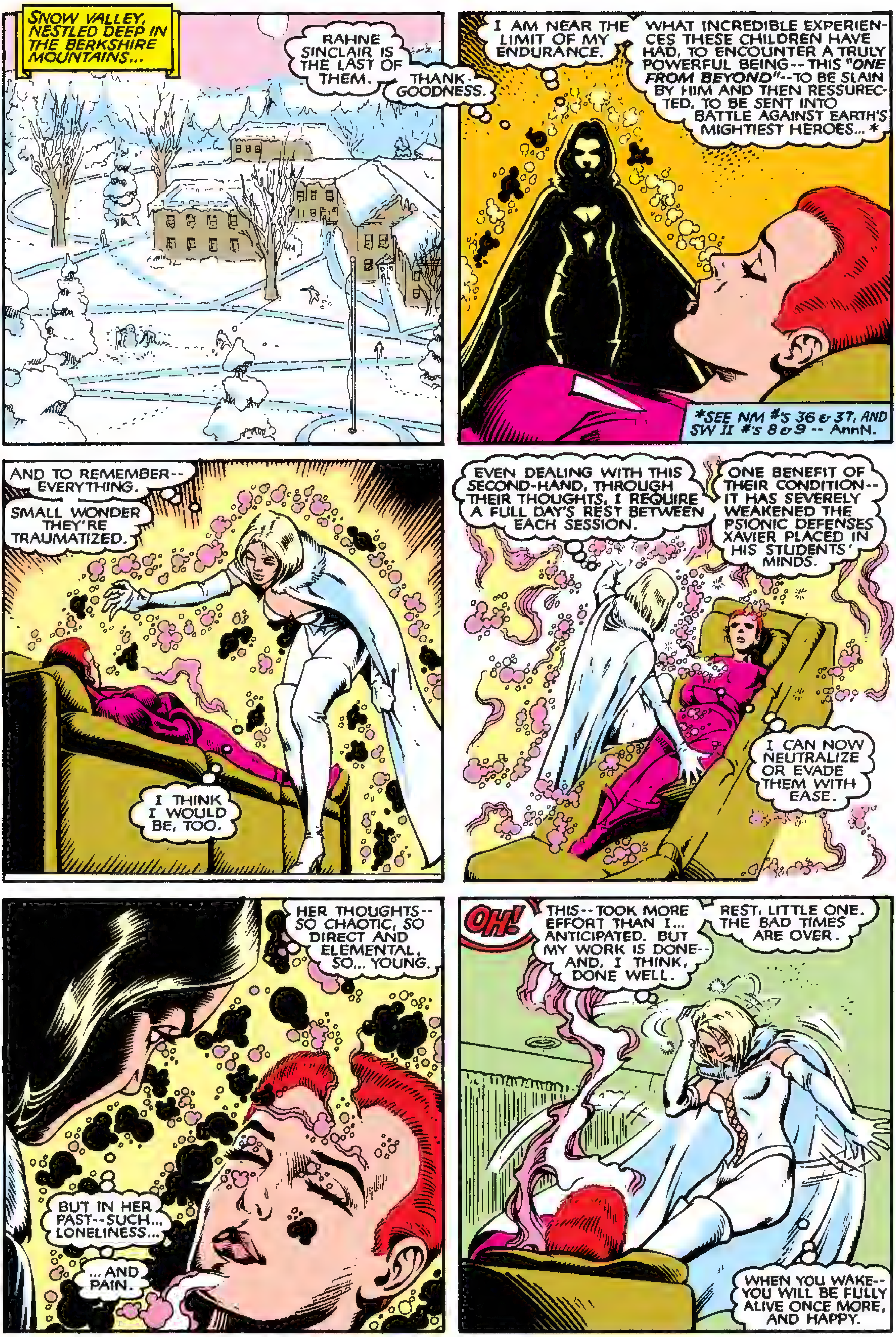

EMPATH?!
COUCHON-- HOW DARE YOU?!
YO, CHUMP-- THIS IS THE GIRLS' LOCKER ROOM. YOU AIN'T ALLOWED.
TAROT-- ROULETTE-- I CAN EXPLAIN!
SNEAKY BADBOY PLAYS HURTFUL HEARTGAMES WITH HELLIONS' NEW FRIENDS?!
MAYBE PLAY A GAME WITH CATSEYE, YES?
SEE WHICH IS STRONGER-- NASTY HEARTPOWER...
...OR CLAWS?!
GOING SO SOON, MANNY?
HERE'S A LITTLE SOMETHING TO SPEED YOU ON YOUR WAY:-
--ONE OF ROULETTE'S PATENTED BAD LUCK ENERGY FRISBEES.
MADRE DE DIOS--
--A WET PATCH OF FLOOR--
--I'M SLIPPING--!
WAM
I TRUST, EMPATH--
--YOU HAVE A VERY GOOD EXPLANATION.
LITTLE REDFUR FURPERSON-- FRIENDS AT LAST, WE ARE, YES! COME TO STAY, BE HAPPY, WITH CATSEYE!
SO IT WOULD SEEM, SHARON.
BUT MY TAROT DECK SAYS DIFFERENTLY.
AND MY CARDS HAVE NEVER LIED.

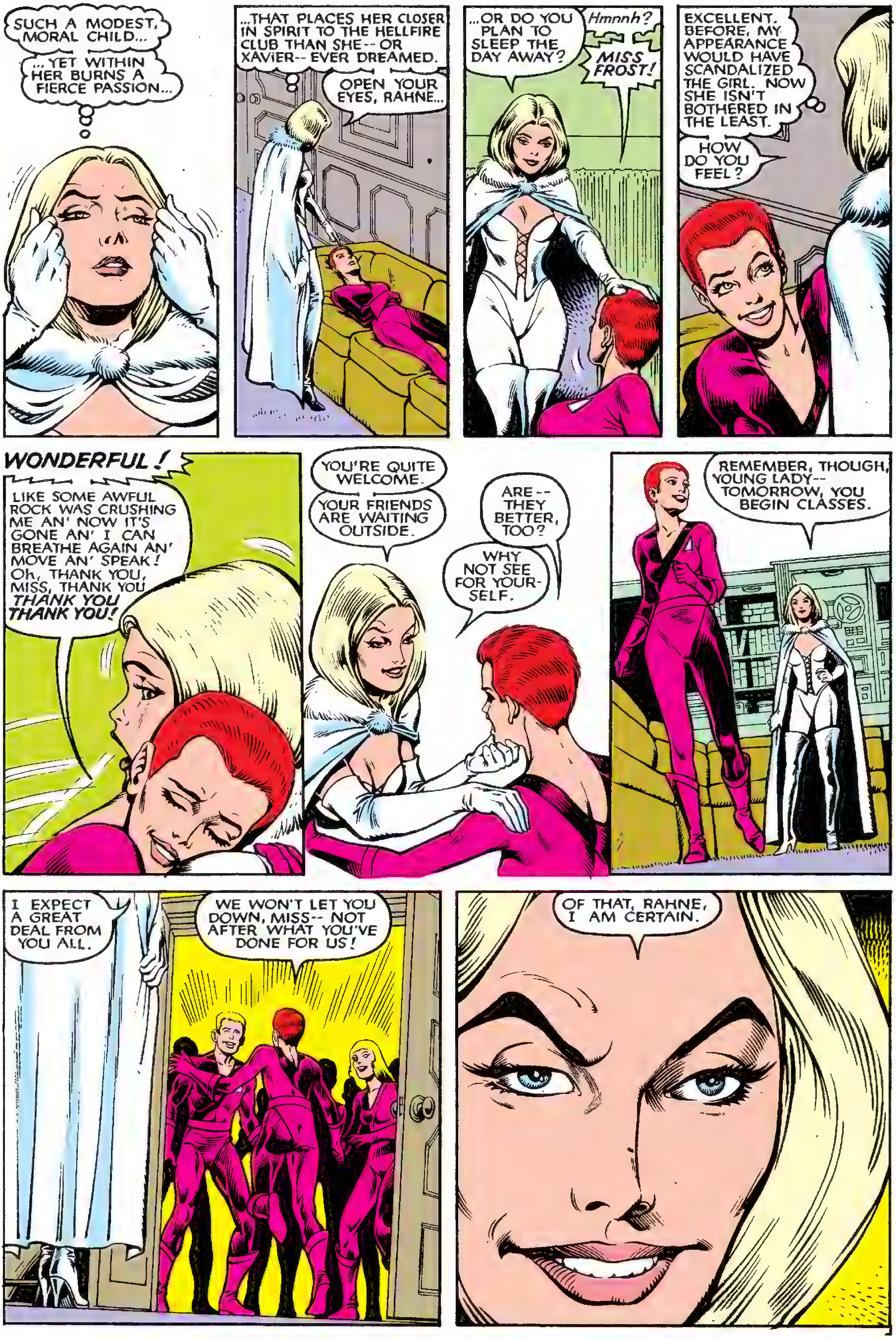

DESPITE TAROT'S UNVOICED MISGIVINGS, THE ADMISSIONS FORMALITIES ARE SOON COMPLETED AND THE ENTIRE TEAM GATHERED IN THE CAVERNOUS TRAINING HALL...
SMILE, STUDENTS--
--FOR YOUR OFFICIAL CLASS PHOTOGRAPH!
FROM THIS MOMENT ON...
...THE NEW MUTANTS ARE NO MORE.
THERE ARE ONLY-- THE HELLIONS!

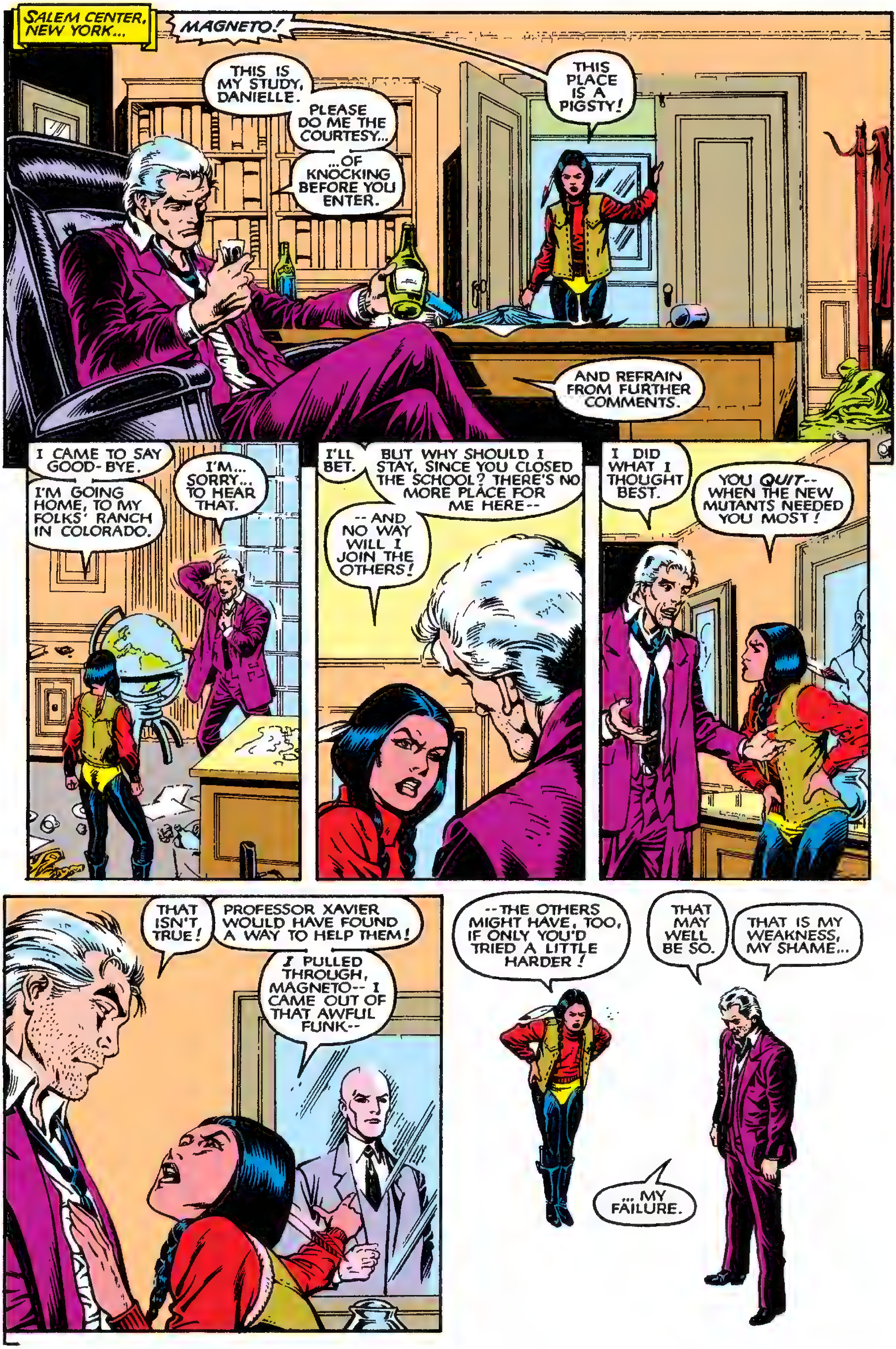

A WEEK LATER, A HUNDRED MILES TO THE SOUTH-- AT WHAT WAS ONCE PROFESSOR CHARLES XAVIER'S HOME FOR GIFTED YOUNGSTERS...
WHAT IS.
WHAT WAS.
HOW BRIGHT THE PROMISE WAS IN SUMMER, HOW FULL OF HOPE THE DREAM.
HOW QUICKLY IT TURNED TO ASHES.
BURIED BENEATH THE MANSION IS THE DANGER ROOM--CORE OF A SPRAWLING UNDERGROUND COMPLEX--
--WHEREIN THE SCHOOL'S STUDENTS LEARNED THE SAFE AND PROPER USE OF THEIR VARIOUS POWERS.
IT'S QUIET AND EMPTY NOW-- AS IT HAS BEEN FOR SOME TIME--
--SAVE FOR THE PRESENCE OF DANIELLE MOONSTAR, CO-LEADER OF THE NEW MUTANTS, ONE OF THE TWO WHO REFUSED THE TRANSFER TO THE MASSACHUSETTS ACADEMY.
HER UNIQUE GIFT IS THE PSYCHIC ABILITY TO REACH INTO ANOTHER'S MIND AND MANIFEST A REAL-AS-LIFE IMAGE OF THAT PERSON'S GREATEST TERROR, OR HEART'S DESIRE.
SHE'S NEVER INTENTIONALLY TRIED IT ON HERSELF.

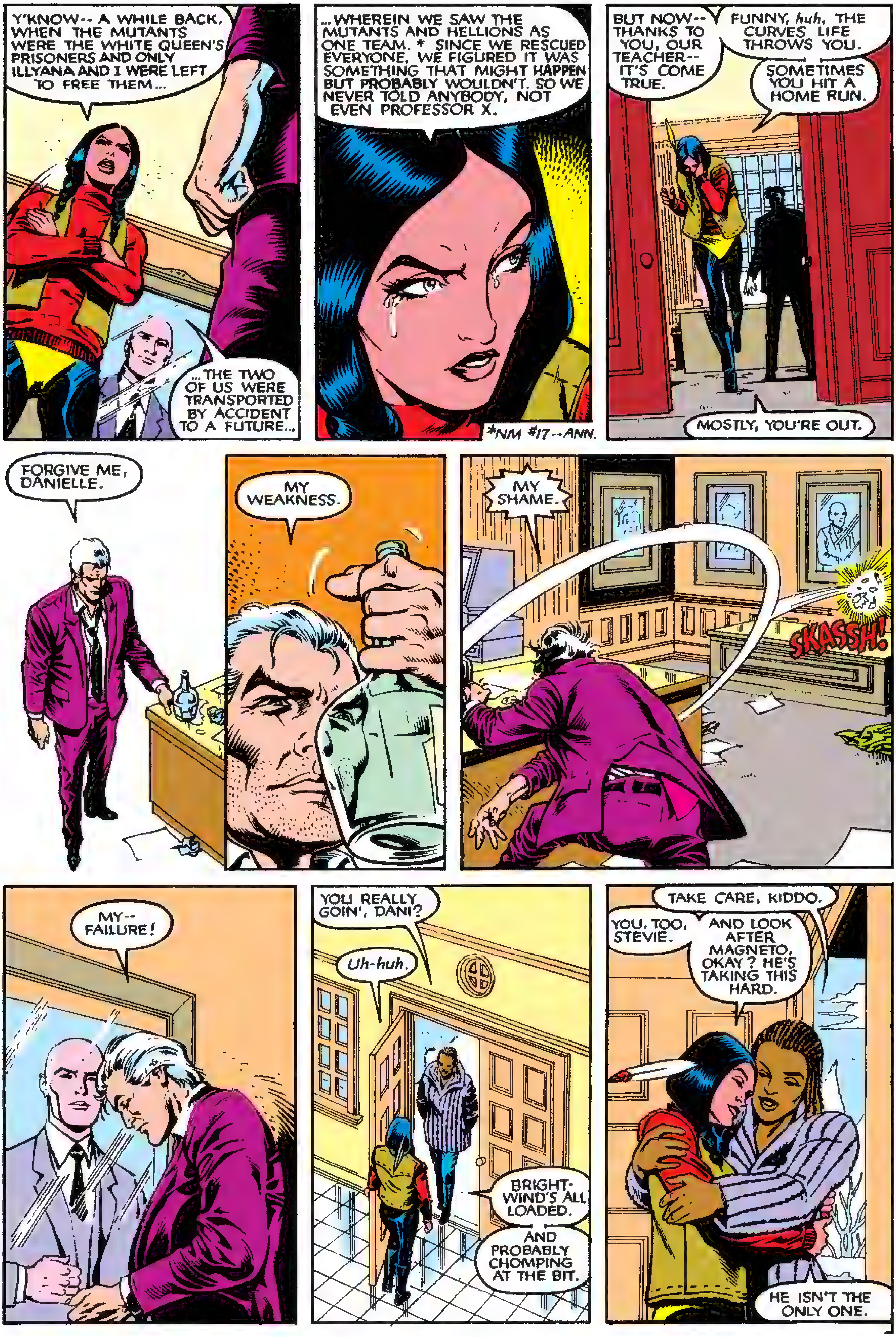

BUT THERE'S A FIRST TIME FOR EVERYTHING.
A TRAINING SESSION-- WHEN WE WERE ALL TOGETHER AND SO COCKY WE FIGURED WE COULD TAKE ON THE UNIVERSE!
TOO BAD WE HAD TO LEARN DIFFERENT THE HARD WAY.
AMARA CREATES A LAVA WALL-- AND SAM SHATTERS IT.
"SUNSPOT PULVERIZES THE PIECES BEFORE THEY HIT ANYONE...
"...WHILE WARLOCK YANKS DOUG OUT OF HARM'S WAY.
"POOR DOUG. HE'S SO CERTAIN HE'S OUR WEAK LINK, SO TICKED OFF THAT WE HAVE TO WATCH OUT FOR HIM.
"HE AND 'LOCK MAKE A DYNAMITE TEAM.
"'MADE' A DYNAMITE TEAM. I KEEP FORGETTING.
"THIS IS ALL OVER AND DONE WITH.
"HERE COMES ILLYANA FROM LIMBO...
"...WITH HER PET DEMON, S'YM.
RAHNE, YOU GLORIOUSLY GUTSY DOPE--!
"YOUR WOLFEN FANGS AND CLAWS WON'T EVEN SCRATCH HIS UGLY HIDE!

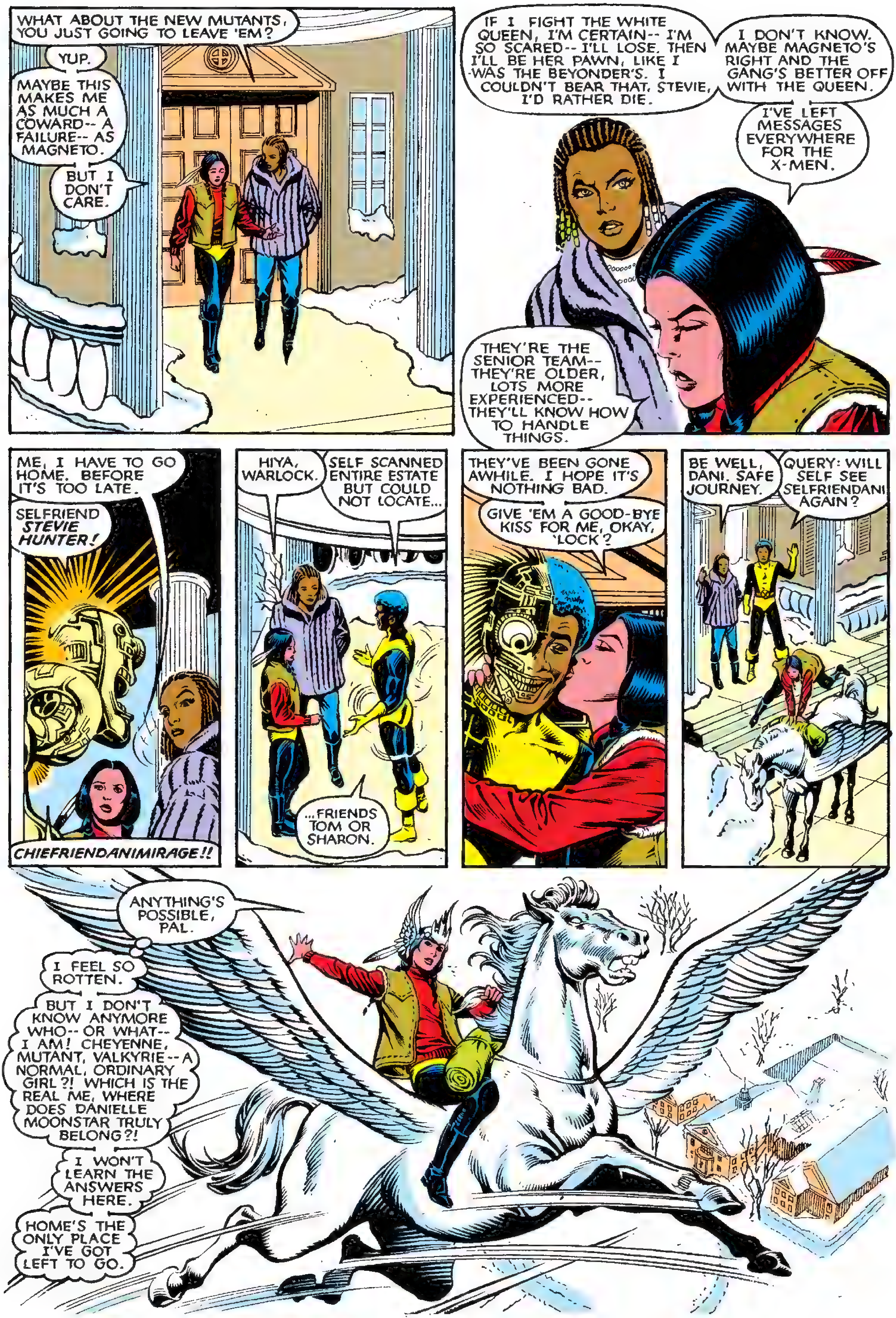

"THIS IS KARMA'S CHALLENGE. THE CRITTER HAS A MIND--GROSS AND DISGUSTO AS IT IS--SHE SHOULD BE ABLE TO POSSESS IT.
"HE'S FIGHTING. HE'S PLENTY TOUGH...
"...BUT SHAN IS TOUGHER!
"AND BEFORE HE GETS MAD--AND THINGS GET NASTY--ILLYANA BIDS HIM FOND FAREWELL AND TELEPORTS HIM BACK WHERE HE BELONGS.
EVEN THINKING ABOUT LIMBO MAKES MY SKIN CRAWL--YET, TO ILLYANA, IT'S MORE HER HOME THAN EARTH.
I WONDER, DOES THAT MAKE MONSTERS LIKE S'YM...
...MORE HER FAMILY?
SO--HOW'D WE DO, TEACH?
"SATISFACTORY," MAGNETO SAYS, PROMISING A MORE DETAILED CRITIQUE IN CLASS, AFTER WE WASHED UP AND CHANGED.
BUT THE SLIGHT SMILE ON HIS FACE GIVES HIS TRUE FEELINGS AWAY.
WE DID GOOD.
AND HE'S PROUD OF US.
AND SO'S PROFESSOR X, WHEREVER HE IS--AMONG THE STARS, OR IN HEAVEN.
ONLY--THIS WAS NEVER THE WAY IT REALLY WAS...
...JUST THE WAY I *WISH* IT WAS.
THE WAY IT MIGHT HAVE BEEN--
--IF WE'D NEVER MET THE BEYONDER!

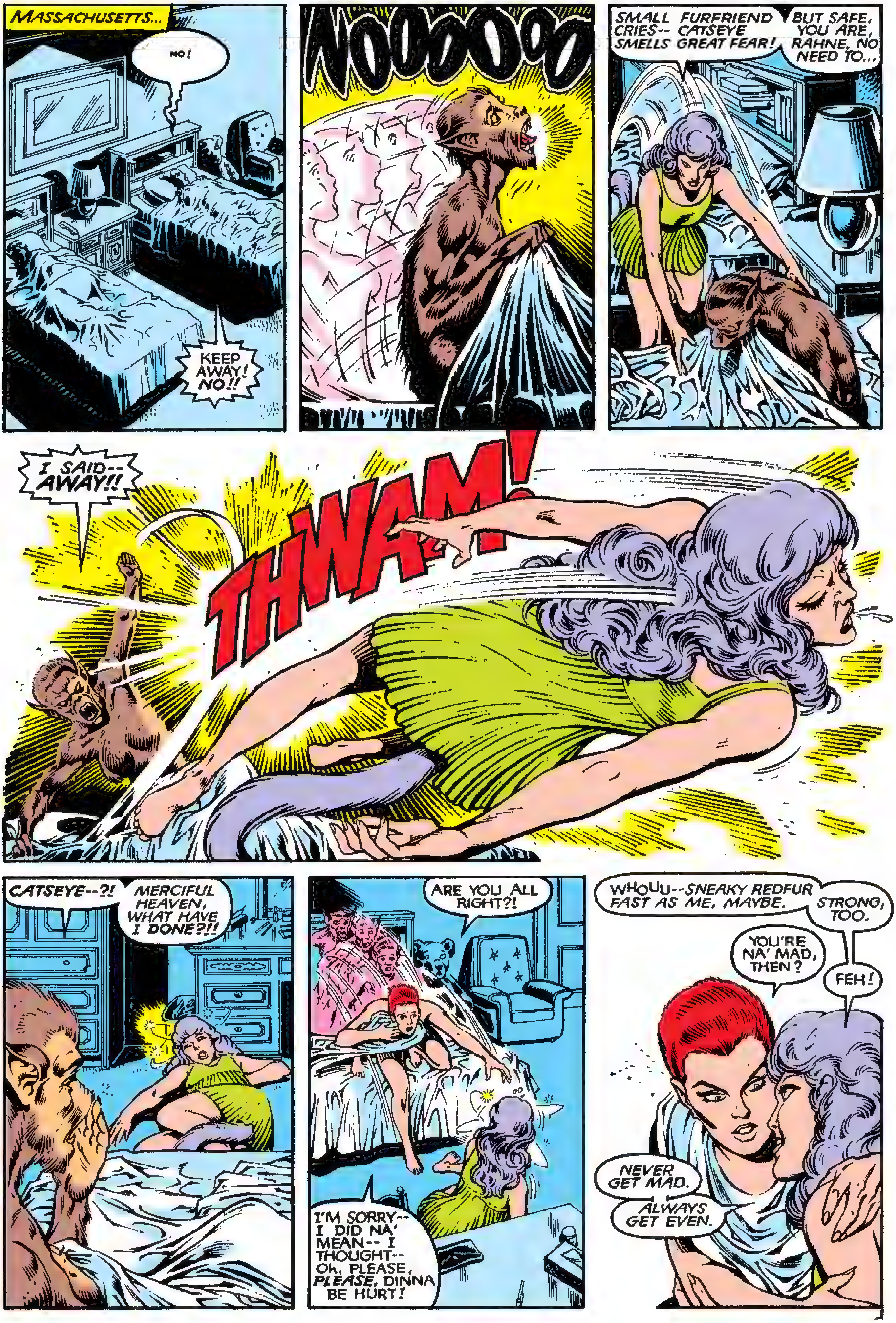

SNOW VALLEY, NESTLED DEEP IN THE BERKSHIRE MOUNTAINS...
RAHNE SINCLAIR IS THE LAST OF THEM.
THANK GOODNESS.
I AM NEAR THE LIMIT OF MY ENDURANCE.
WHAT INCREDIBLE EXPERIENCES THESE CHILDREN HAVE HAD, TO ENCOUNTER A TRULY POWERFUL BEING--THIS "ONE FROM BEYOND"--TO BE SLAIN BY HIM AND THEN RESSURECTED, TO BE SENT INTO BATTLE AGAINST EARTH'S MIGHTIEST HEROES...*
*SEE NM #'s 36 & 37, AND SW II #'s 8 & 9 -- AnnN.
AND TO REMEMBER-- EVERYTHING.
SMALL WONDER THEY'RE TRAUMATIZED.
I THINK I WOULD BE, TOO.
EVEN DEALING WITH THIS SECOND-HAND, THROUGH THEIR THOUGHTS, I REQUIRE A FULL DAY'S REST BETWEEN EACH SESSION.
ONE BENEFIT OF THEIR CONDITION-- IT HAS SEVERELY WEAKENED THE PSIONIC DEFENSES XAVIER PLACED IN HIS STUDENTS' MINDS.
I CAN NOW NEUTRALIZE OR EVADE THEM WITH EASE.
HER THOUGHTS-- SO CHAOTIC, SO DIRECT AND ELEMENTAL, SO... YOUNG.
BUT IN HER PAST--SUCH... LONELINESS...
...AND PAIN.
OH!
THIS--TOOK MORE EFFORT THAN I... ANTICIPATED. BUT MY WORK IS DONE-- AND, I THINK, DONE WELL.
REST, LITTLE ONE. THE BAD TIMES ARE OVER.
WHEN YOU WAKE-- YOU WILL BE FULLY ALIVE ONCE MORE, AND HAPPY.

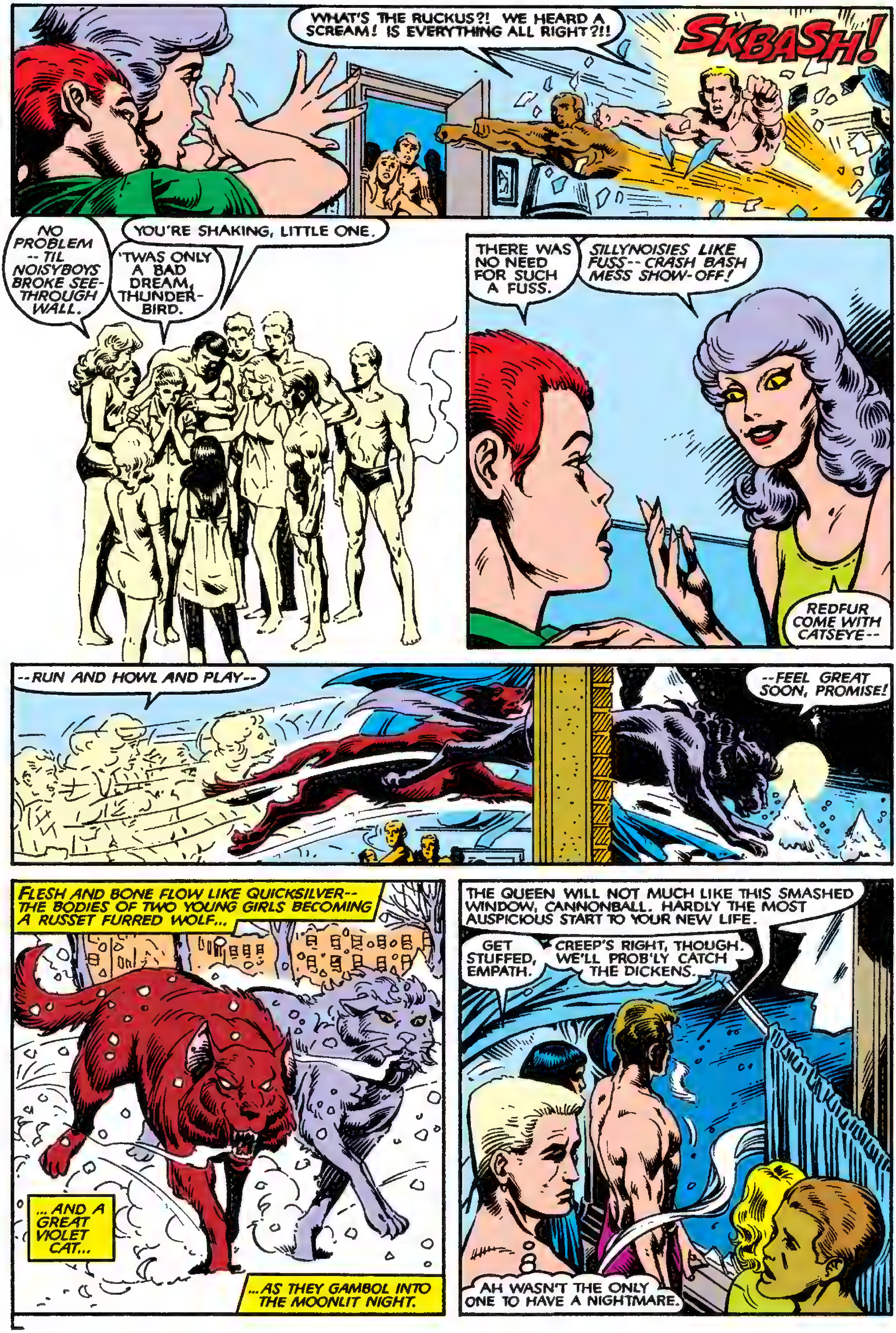

SUCH A MODEST, MORAL CHILD...
... YET WITHIN HER BURNS A FIERCE PASSION...
...THAT PLACES HER CLOSER IN SPIRIT TO THE HELLFIRE CLUB THAN SHE-- OR XAVIER-- EVER DREAMED.
OPEN YOUR EYES, RAHNE...
...OR DO YOU PLAN TO SLEEP THE DAY AWAY?
Hmnnh?
MISS FROST!
EXCELLENT. BEFORE, MY APPEARANCE WOULD HAVE SCANDALIZED THE GIRL. NOW SHE ISN'T BOTHERED IN THE LEAST.
HOW DO YOU FEEL?
WONDERFUL!
LIKE SOME AWFUL ROCK WAS CRUSHING ME AN' NOW IT'S GONE AN' I CAN BREATHE AGAIN AN' MOVE AN' SPEAK! Oh, THANK YOU, MISS, THANK YOU THANK YOU THANK YOU!
YOU'RE QUITE WELCOME.
YOUR FRIENDS ARE WAITING OUTSIDE.
ARE -- THEY BETTER, TOO?
WHY NOT SEE FOR YOURSELF.
REMEMBER, THOUGH, YOUNG LADY-- TOMORROW, YOU BEGIN CLASSES.
I EXPECT A GREAT DEAL FROM YOU ALL.
WE WON'T LET YOU DOWN, MISS-- NOT AFTER WHAT YOU'VE DONE FOR US!
OF THAT, RAHNE, I AM CERTAIN.

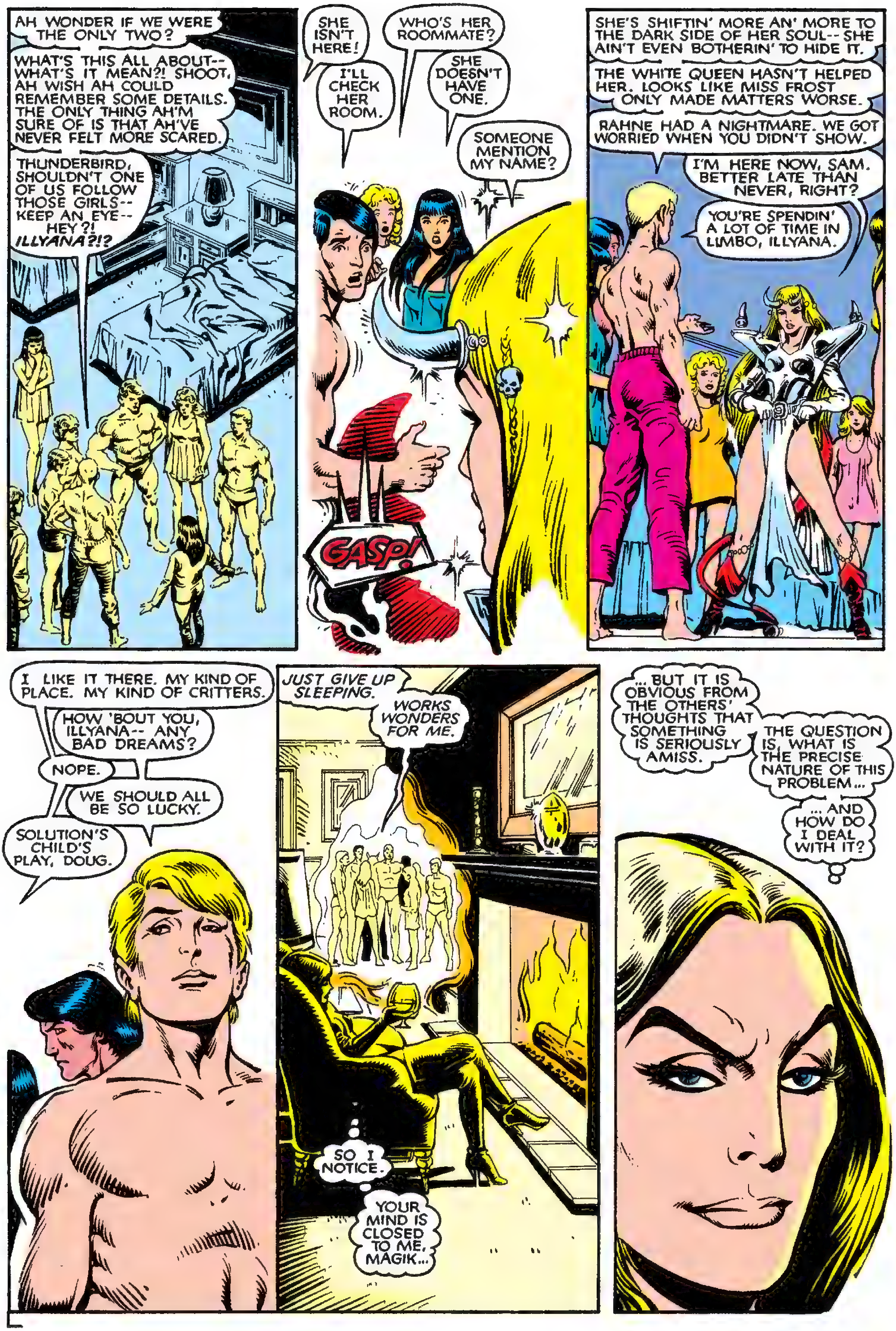

SALEM CENTER, NEW YORK...
MAGNETO!
THIS IS MY STUDY, DANIELLE.
PLEASE DO ME THE COURTESY...
...OF KNOCKING BEFORE YOU ENTER.
THIS PLACE IS A PIGSTY!
AND REFRAIN FROM FURTHER COMMENTS.
I CAME TO SAY GOOD-BYE.
I'M GOING HOME, TO MY FOLKS' RANCH IN COLORADO.
I'M... SORRY... TO HEAR THAT.
I'LL BET.
BUT WHY SHOULD I STAY, SINCE YOU CLOSED THE SCHOOL? THERE'S NO MORE PLACE FOR ME HERE--
-- AND NO WAY WILL I JOIN THE OTHERS!
I DID WHAT I THOUGHT BEST.
YOU *QUIT*-- WHEN THE NEW MUTANTS NEEDED YOU MOST!
THAT ISN'T TRUE!
PROFESSOR XAVIER WOULD HAVE FOUND A WAY TO HELP THEM!
I PULLED THROUGH, MAGNETO-- I CAME OUT OF THAT AWFUL FUNK--
--THE OTHERS MIGHT HAVE, TOO, IF ONLY YOU'D TRIED A LITTLE HARDER!
THAT MAY WELL BE SO.
THAT IS MY WEAKNESS, MY SHAME...
...MY FAILURE.

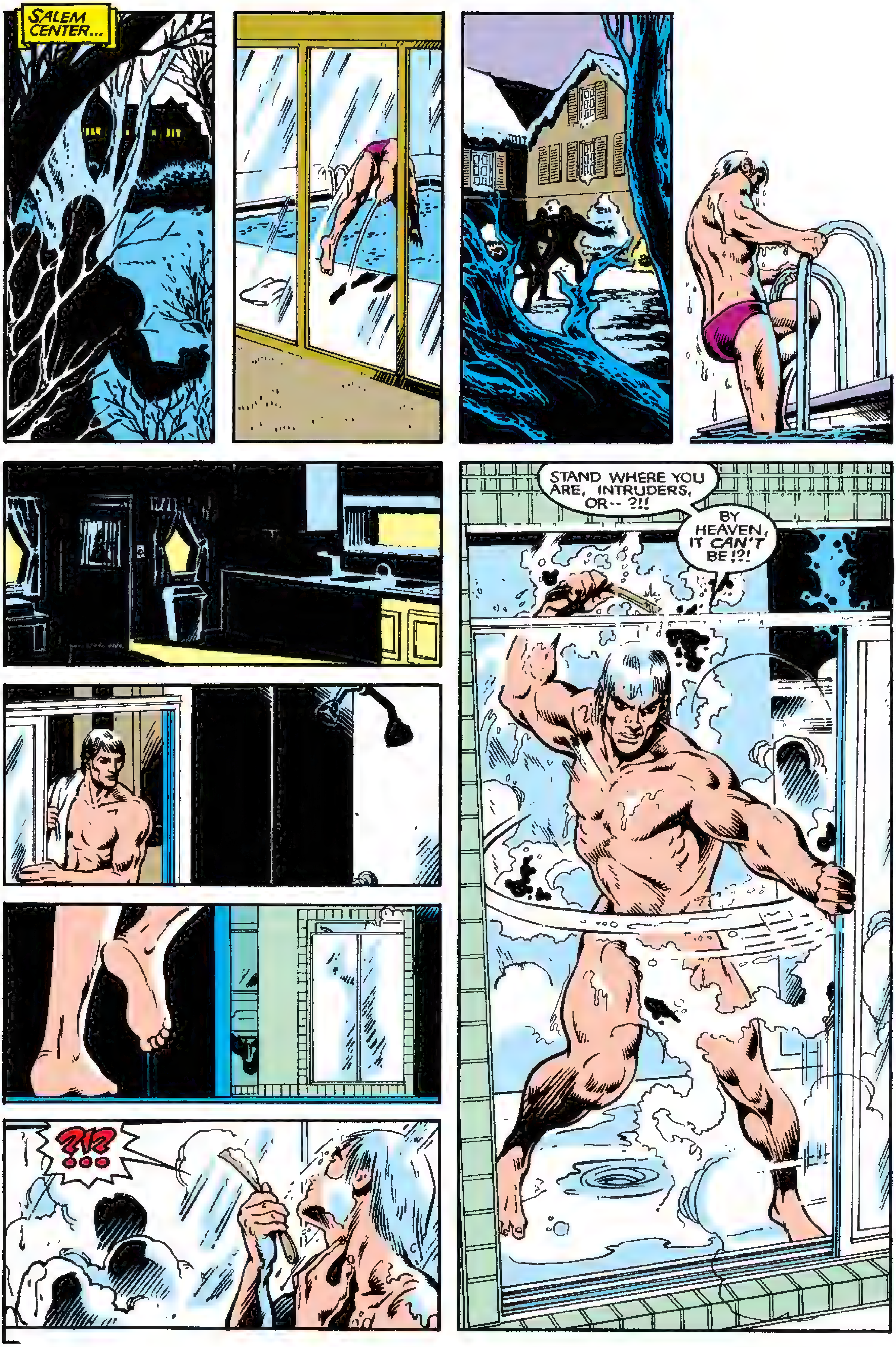

Y'KNOW-- A WHILE BACK, WHEN THE MUTANTS WERE THE WHITE QUEEN'S PRISONERS AND ONLY ILLYANA AND I WERE LEFT TO FREE THEM...
...THE TWO OF US WERE TRANSPORTED BY ACCIDENT TO A FUTURE...
...WHEREIN WE SAW THE MUTANTS AND HELLIONS AS ONE TEAM.* SINCE WE RESCUED EVERYONE, WE FIGURED IT WAS SOMETHING THAT MIGHT HAPPEN BUT PROBABLY WOULDN'T. SO WE NEVER TOLD ANYBODY, NOT EVEN PROFESSOR X.
*NM #17--ANN.
BUT NOW-- THANKS TO YOU, OUR TEACHER-- IT'S COME TRUE.
FUNNY, *huh*, THE CURVES LIFE THROWS YOU.
SOMETIMES YOU HIT A HOME RUN.
MOSTLY, YOU'RE OUT.
FORGIVE ME, DANIELLE.
MY WEAKNESS.
MY SHAME.
SKASSH!
MY-- FAILURE!
YOU REALLY GOIN', DANI?
Uh-huh.
BRIGHTWIND'S ALL LOADED.
AND PROBABLY CHOMPING AT THE BIT.
TAKE CARE, KIDDO.
YOU, TOO, STEVIE.
AND LOOK AFTER MAGNETO, OKAY? HE'S TAKING THIS HARD.
HE ISN'T THE ONLY ONE.

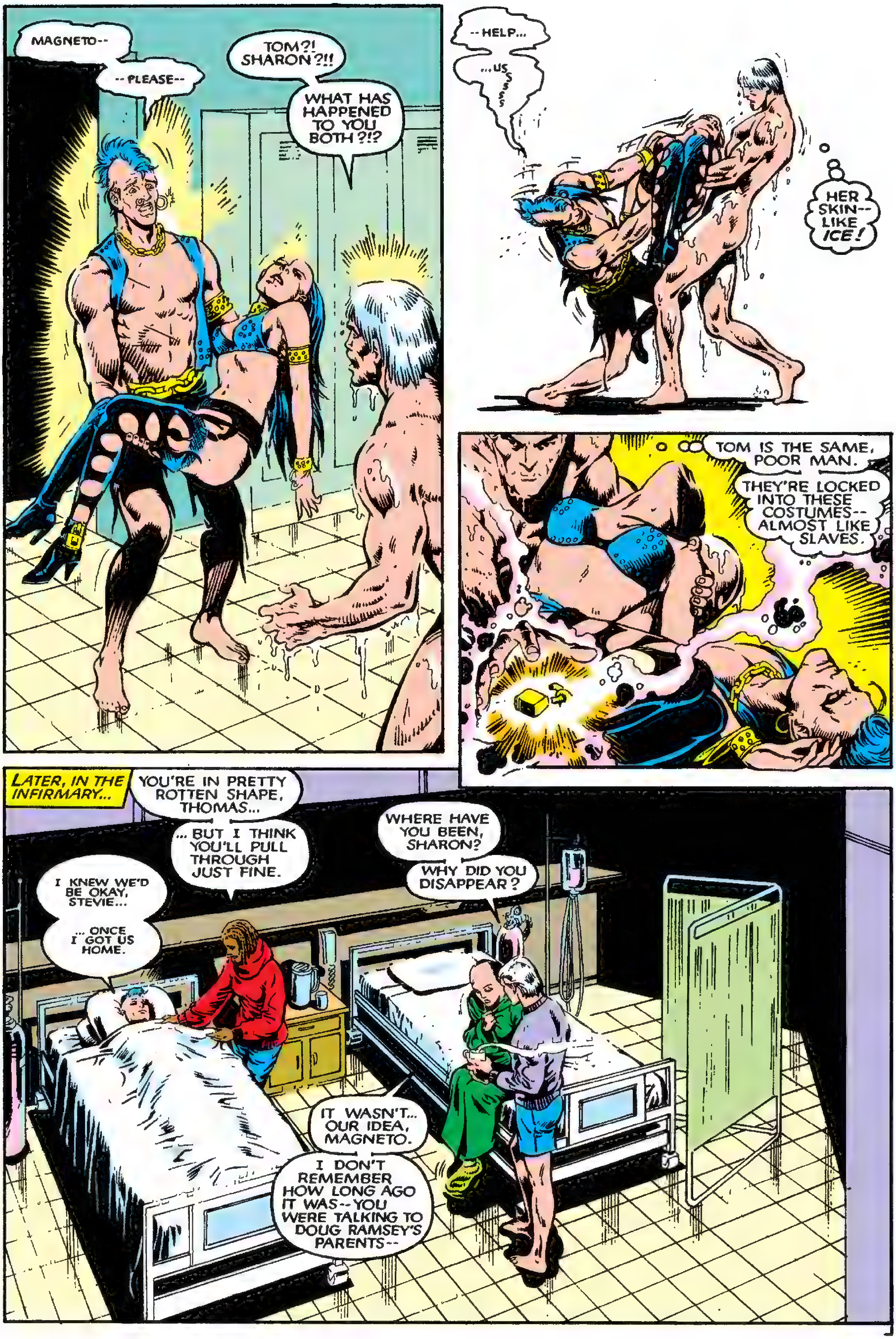

WHAT ABOUT THE NEW MUTANTS, YOU JUST GOING TO LEAVE 'EM?
YUP.
MAYBE THIS MAKES ME AS MUCH A COWARD-- A FAILURE-- AS MAGNETO.
BUT I DON'T CARE.
IF I FIGHT THE WHITE QUEEN, I'M CERTAIN-- I'M SO SCARED-- I'LL LOSE. THEN I'LL BE HER PAWN, LIKE I WAS THE BEYONDER'S. I COULDN'T BEAR THAT, STEVIE. I'D RATHER DIE.
I DON'T KNOW. MAYBE MAGNETO'S RIGHT AND THE GANG'S BETTER OFF WITH THE QUEEN.
I'VE LEFT MESSAGES EVERYWHERE FOR THE X-MEN.
THEY'RE THE SENIOR TEAM-- THEY'RE OLDER, LOTS MORE EXPERIENCED-- THEY'LL KNOW HOW TO HANDLE THINGS.
ME, I HAVE TO GO HOME. BEFORE IT'S TOO LATE.
SELFRIEND *STEVIE HUNTER!*
CHIEFRIENDANIMIRAGE!!
HIYA, WARLOCK.
SELF SCANNED ENTIRE ESTATE BUT COULD NOT LOCATE...
...FRIENDS TOM OR SHARON.
THEY'VE BEEN GONE AWHILE. I HOPE IT'S NOTHING BAD.
GIVE 'EM A GOOD-BYE KISS FOR ME, OKAY, 'LOCK?
BE WELL, DANI. SAFE JOURNEY.
QUERY: WILL SELF SEE SELFRIENDANI AGAIN?
ANYTHING'S POSSIBLE, PAL.
I FEEL SO ROTTEN.
BUT I DON'T KNOW ANYMORE WHO-- OR WHAT-- I AM! CHEYENNE, MUTANT, VALKYRIE-- A NORMAL, ORDINARY GIRL?! WHICH IS THE REAL ME, WHERE DOES DANIELLE MOONSTAR TRULY BELONG?!
I WON'T LEARN THE ANSWERS HERE.
HOME'S THE ONLY PLACE I'VE GOT LEFT TO GO.

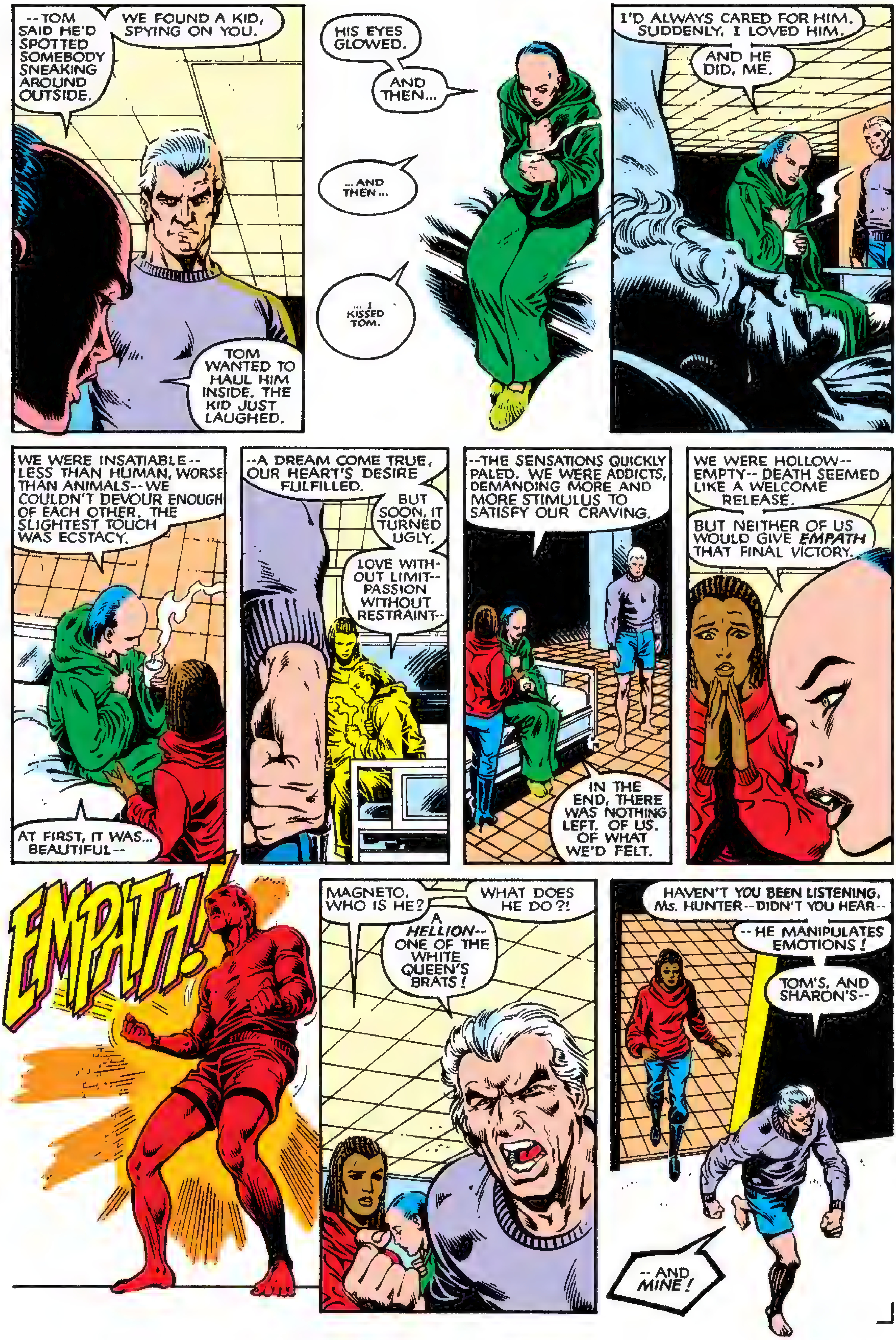

MASSACHUSETTS...
NO!
KEEP AWAY! NO!!
NOOOOOO
SMALL FURFRIEND CRIES-- CATSEYE SMELLS GREAT FEAR!
BUT SAFE, YOU ARE, RAHNE. NO NEED TO...
I SAID-- AWAY!!
THWAM!
CATSEYE--?!
MERCIFUL HEAVEN, WHAT HAVE I DONE?!!
ARE YOU ALL RIGHT?!
I'M SORRY-- I DID NA' MEAN-- I THOUGHT-- Oh, PLEASE, PLEASE, DINNA BE HURT!
WHOUU--SNEAKY REDFUR FAST AS ME, MAYBE.
STRONG, TOO.
YOU'RE NA' MAD, THEN?
FEH!
NEVER GET MAD.
ALWAYS GET EVEN.

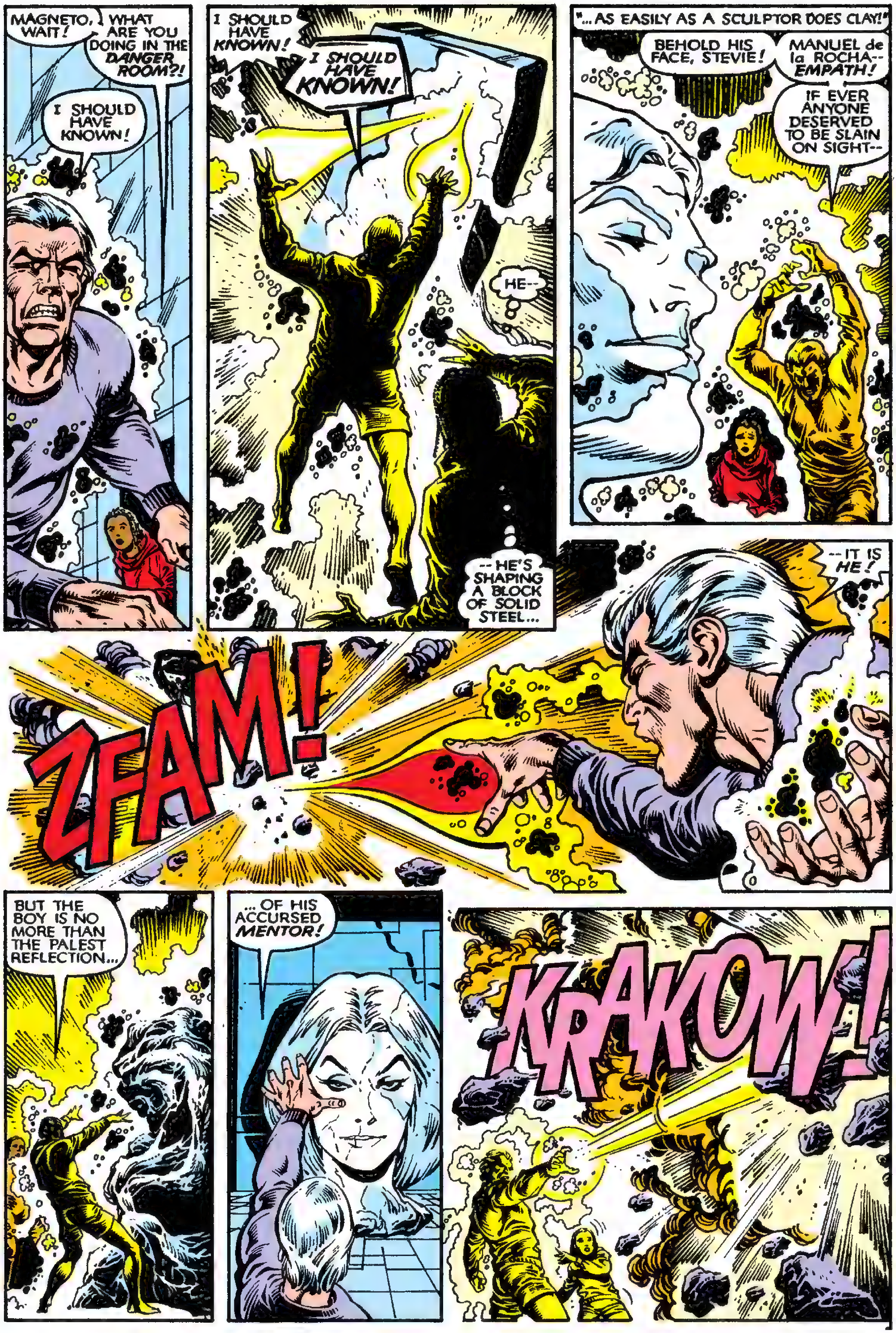

WHAT'S THE RUCKUS?! WE HEARD A SCREAM! IS EVERYTHING ALL RIGHT?!!
SKBASH!
NO PROBLEM -- TIL NOISYBOYS BROKE SEE-THROUGH WALL.
YOU'RE SHAKING, LITTLE ONE.
'TWAS ONLY A BAD DREAM, THUNDERBIRD.
THERE WAS NO NEED FOR SUCH A FUSS.
SILLYNOISIES LIKE FUSS-- CRASH BASH MESS SHOW-OFF!
REDFUR COME WITH CATSEYE--
--RUN AND HOWL AND PLAY--
--FEEL GREAT SOON, PROMISE!
FLESH AND BONE FLOW LIKE QUICKSILVER-- THE BODIES OF TWO YOUNG GIRLS BECOMING A RUSSET FURRED WOLF...
...AND A GREAT VIOLET CAT...
...AS THEY GAMBOL INTO THE MOONLIT NIGHT.
THE QUEEN WILL NOT MUCH LIKE THIS SMASHED WINDOW, CANNONBALL. HARDLY THE MOST AUSPICIOUS START TO YOUR NEW LIFE.
GET STUFFED, EMPATH.
CREEP'S RIGHT, THOUGH. WE'LL PROB'LY CATCH THE DICKENS.
AH WASN'T THE ONLY ONE TO HAVE A NIGHTMARE.

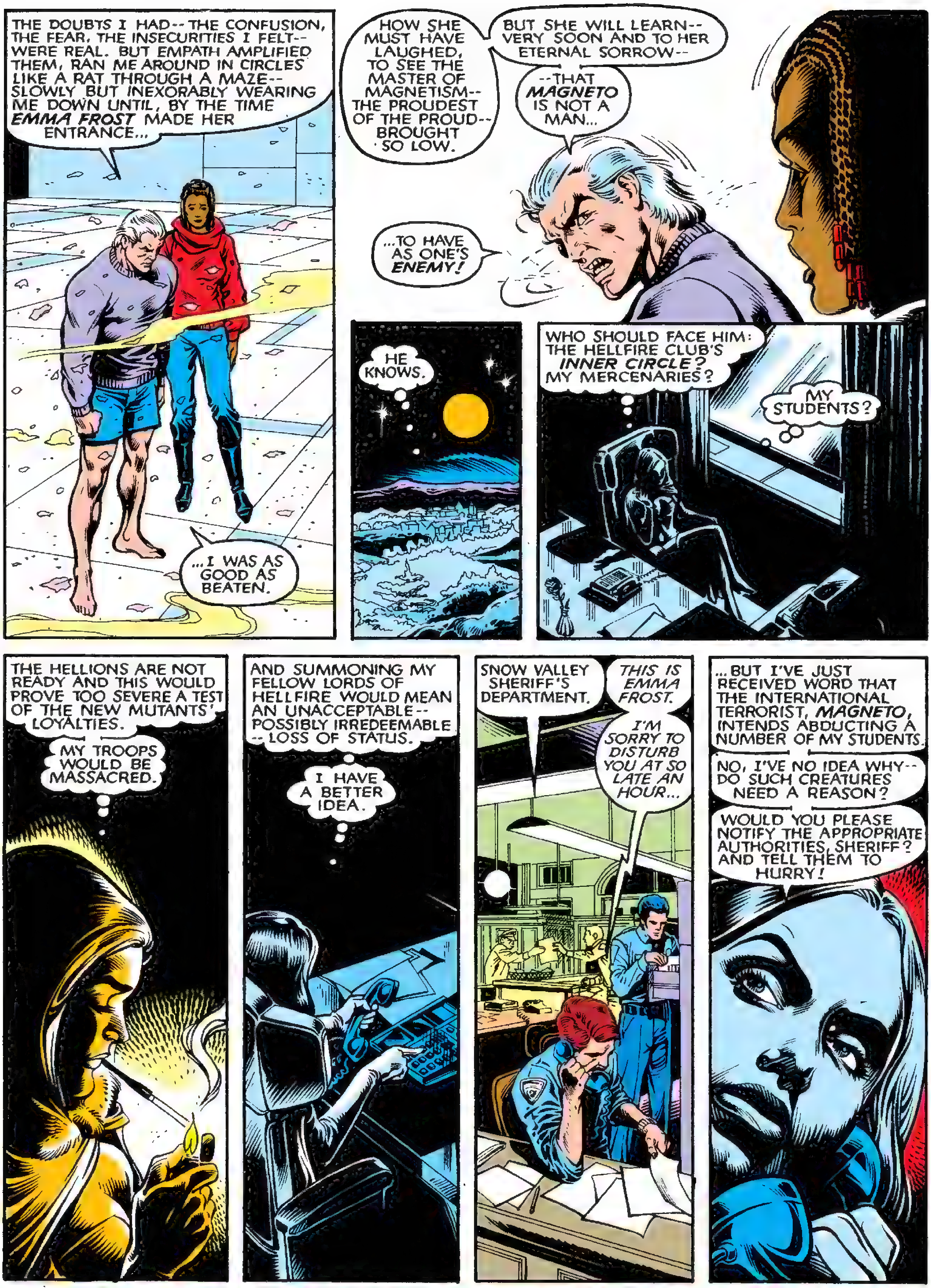

AH WONDER IF WE WERE THE ONLY TWO?
WHAT'S THIS ALL ABOUT-- WHAT'S IT MEAN?! SHOOT, AH WISH AH COULD REMEMBER SOME DETAILS. THE ONLY THING AH'M SURE OF IS THAT AH'VE NEVER FELT MORE SCARED.
THUNDERBIRD, SHOULDN'T ONE OF US FOLLOW THOSE GIRLS-- KEEP AN EYE-- HEY?! ILLYANA?!?
SHE ISN'T HERE!
I'LL CHECK HER ROOM.
WHO'S HER ROOMMATE?
SHE DOESN'T HAVE ONE.
SOMEONE MENTION MY NAME?
GASP!
SHE'S SHIFTIN' MORE AN' MORE TO THE DARK SIDE OF HER SOUL-- SHE AIN'T EVEN BOTHERIN' TO HIDE IT.
THE WHITE QUEEN HASN'T HELPED HER. LOOKS LIKE MISS FROST ONLY MADE MATTERS WORSE.
RAHNE HAD A NIGHTMARE. WE GOT WORRIED WHEN YOU DIDN'T SHOW.
I'M HERE NOW, SAM. BETTER LATE THAN NEVER, RIGHT?
YOU'RE SPENDIN' A LOT OF TIME IN LIMBO, ILLYANA.
I LIKE IT THERE. MY KIND OF PLACE. MY KIND OF CRITTERS.
HOW 'BOUT YOU, ILLYANA-- ANY BAD DREAMS?
NOPE.
WE SHOULD ALL BE SO LUCKY.
SOLUTION'S CHILD'S PLAY, DOUG.
JUST GIVE UP SLEEPING.
WORKS WONDERS FOR ME.
SO I NOTICE.
YOUR MIND IS CLOSED TO ME, MAGIK...
... BUT IT IS OBVIOUS FROM THE OTHERS' THOUGHTS THAT SOMETHING IS SERIOUSLY AMISS.
THE QUESTION IS, WHAT IS THE PRECISE NATURE OF THIS PROBLEM...
... AND HOW DO I DEAL WITH IT?


SALEM CENTER...
?!?
...
STAND WHERE YOU ARE, INTRUDERS, OR-- ?!!
BY HEAVEN, IT CAN'T BE !?!


MAGNETO--
-- PLEASE--
TOM?! SHARON?!!
WHAT HAS HAPPENED TO YOU BOTH?!?
-- HELP...
... US
HER SKIN-- LIKE ICE!
TOM IS THE SAME, POOR MAN.
THEY'RE LOCKED INTO THESE COSTUMES-- ALMOST LIKE SLAVES.
LATER, IN THE INFIRMARY...
YOU'RE IN PRETTY ROTTEN SHAPE, THOMAS...
... BUT I THINK YOU'LL PULL THROUGH JUST FINE.
WHERE HAVE YOU BEEN, SHARON?
WHY DID YOU DISAPPEAR?
I KNEW WE'D BE OKAY, STEVIE...
... ONCE I GOT US HOME.
IT WASN'T... OUR IDEA, MAGNETO.
I DON'T REMEMBER HOW LONG AGO IT WAS--YOU WERE TALKING TO DOUG RAMSEY'S PARENTS--


WE FOUND A KID, SPYING ON YOU.
--TOM SAID HE'D SPOTTED SOMEBODY SNEAKING AROUND OUTSIDE.
TOM WANTED TO HAUL HIM INSIDE. THE KID JUST LAUGHED.
HIS EYES GLOWED.
AND THEN...
...AND THEN...
...I KISSED TOM.
I'D ALWAYS CARED FOR HIM. SUDDENLY, I LOVED HIM.
AND HE DID, ME.
WE WERE INSATIABLE--LESS THAN HUMAN, WORSE THAN ANIMALS--WE COULDN'T DEVOUR ENOUGH OF EACH OTHER. THE SLIGHTEST TOUCH WAS ECSTACY.
AT FIRST, IT WAS... BEAUTIFUL--
--A DREAM COME TRUE, OUR HEART'S DESIRE FULFILLED.
BUT SOON, IT TURNED UGLY.
LOVE WITHOUT LIMIT--PASSION WITHOUT RESTRAINT--
--THE SENSATIONS QUICKLY PALED. WE WERE ADDICTS, DEMANDING MORE AND MORE STIMULUS TO SATISFY OUR CRAVING.
IN THE END, THERE WAS NOTHING LEFT. OF US. OF WHAT WE'D FELT.
WE WERE HOLLOW--EMPTY--DEATH SEEMED LIKE A WELCOME RELEASE.
BUT NEITHER OF US WOULD GIVE EMPATH THAT FINAL VICTORY.
EMPATH!
MAGNETO, WHO IS HE?
WHAT DOES HE DO?!
A HELLION--ONE OF THE WHITE QUEEN'S BRATS!
HAVEN'T YOU BEEN LISTENING, Ms. HUNTER--DIDN'T YOU HEAR--
--HE MANIPULATES EMOTIONS!
TOM'S, AND SHARON'S--
--AND MINE!


MAGNETO, WAIT!
WHAT ARE YOU DOING IN THE *DANGER ROOM?!*
I SHOULD HAVE KNOWN!
I SHOULD HAVE *KNOWN!*
I SHOULD HAVE KNOWN!
HE--
--HE'S SHAPING A BLOCK OF SOLID STEEL...
"...AS EASILY AS A SCULPTOR DOES CLAY!"
BEHOLD HIS FACE, STEVIE!
MANUEL de la ROCHA-- *EMPATH!*
IF EVER ANYONE DESERVED TO BE SLAIN ON SIGHT--
--IT IS *HE!*
ZFAM!
BUT THE BOY IS NO MORE THAN THE PALEST REFLECTION...
...OF HIS ACCURSED *MENTOR!*
KRAKOW!


THE DOUBTS I HAD-- THE CONFUSION, THE FEAR, THE INSECURITIES I FELT-- WERE REAL. BUT EMPATH AMPLIFIED THEM, RAN ME AROUND IN CIRCLES LIKE A RAT THROUGH A MAZE-- SLOWLY BUT INEXORABLY WEARING ME DOWN UNTIL, BY THE TIME ***EMMA FROST*** MADE HER ENTRANCE...
...I WAS AS GOOD AS BEATEN.
HOW SHE MUST HAVE LAUGHED, TO SEE THE MASTER OF MAGNETISM-- THE PROUDEST OF THE PROUD-- BROUGHT SO LOW.
BUT SHE WILL LEARN-- VERY SOON AND TO HER ETERNAL SORROW--
--THAT ***MAGNETO*** IS NOT A MAN...
...TO HAVE AS ONE'S ***ENEMY!***
HE KNOWS.
WHO SHOULD FACE HIM: THE HELLFIRE CLUB'S ***INNER CIRCLE?*** MY MERCENARIES?
MY STUDENTS?
THE HELLIONS ARE NOT READY AND THIS WOULD PROVE TOO SEVERE A TEST OF THE NEW MUTANTS' LOYALTIES.
MY TROOPS WOULD BE MASSACRED.
AND SUMMONING MY FELLOW LORDS OF HELLFIRE WOULD MEAN AN UNACCEPTABLE-- POSSIBLY IRREDEEMABLE -- LOSS OF STATUS.
I HAVE A BETTER IDEA.
SNOW VALLEY SHERIFF'S DEPARTMENT.
THIS IS EMMA FROST.
I'M SORRY TO DISTURB YOU AT SO LATE AN HOUR...
...BUT I'VE JUST RECEIVED WORD THAT THE INTERNATIONAL TERRORIST, ***MAGNETO,*** INTENDS ABDUCTING A NUMBER OF MY STUDENTS.
NO, I'VE NO IDEA WHY-- DO SUCH CREATURES NEED A REASON?
WOULD YOU PLEASE NOTIFY THE APPROPRIATE AUTHORITIES, SHERIFF? AND TELL THEM TO HURRY!

NEXT: AVENGERS ASSEMBLE!

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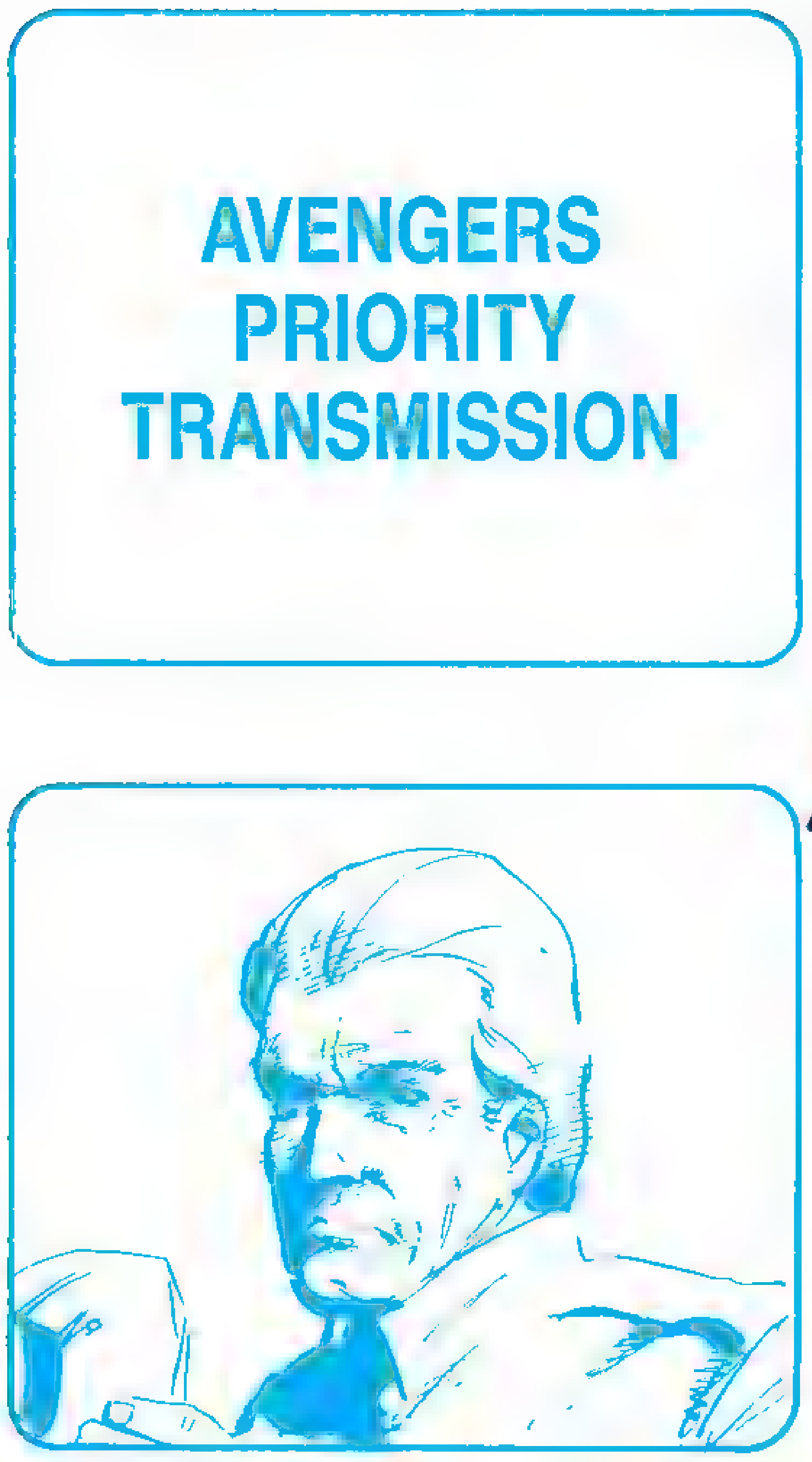

AVENGERS PRIORITY TRANSMISSION

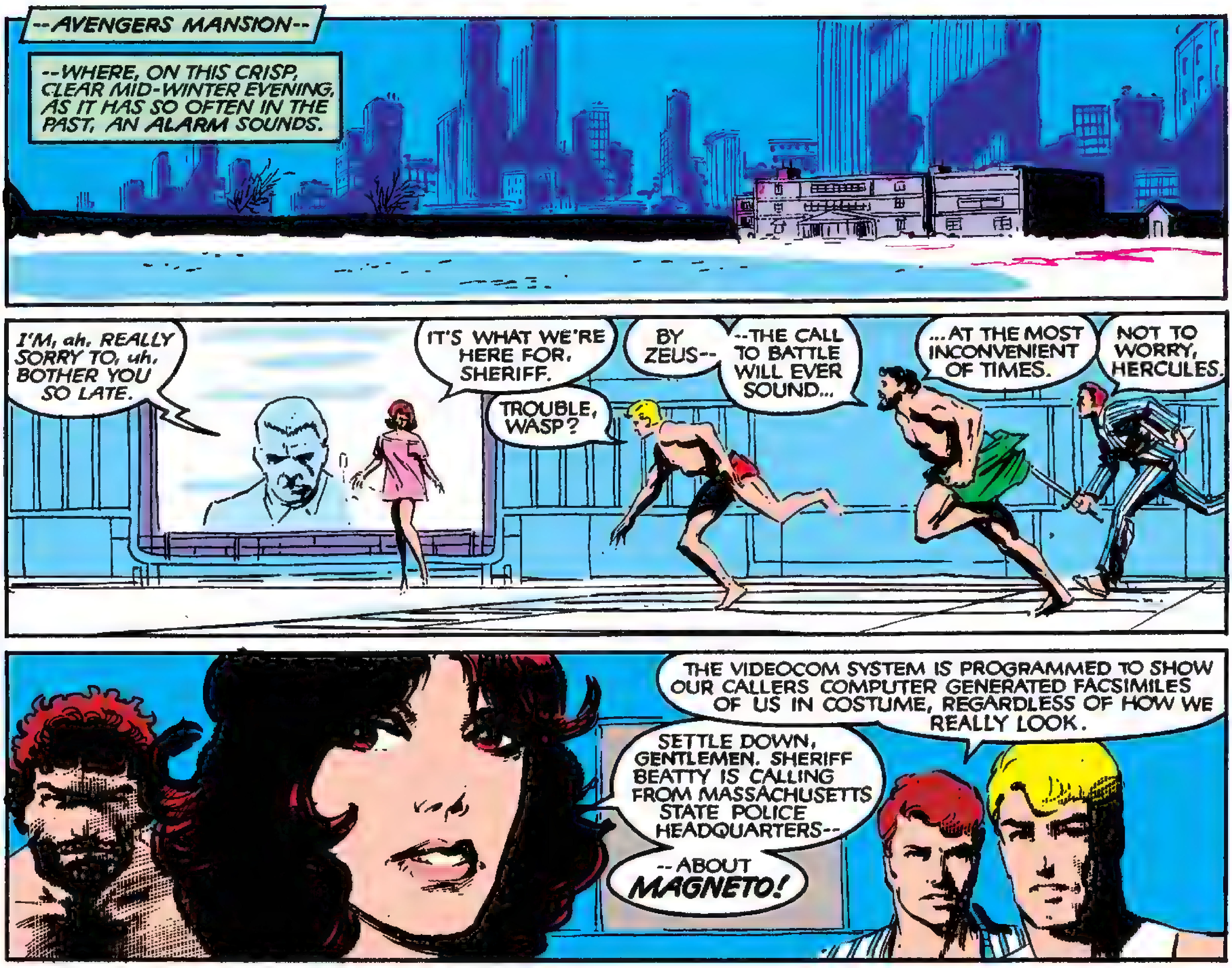
STAN LEE PRESENTS

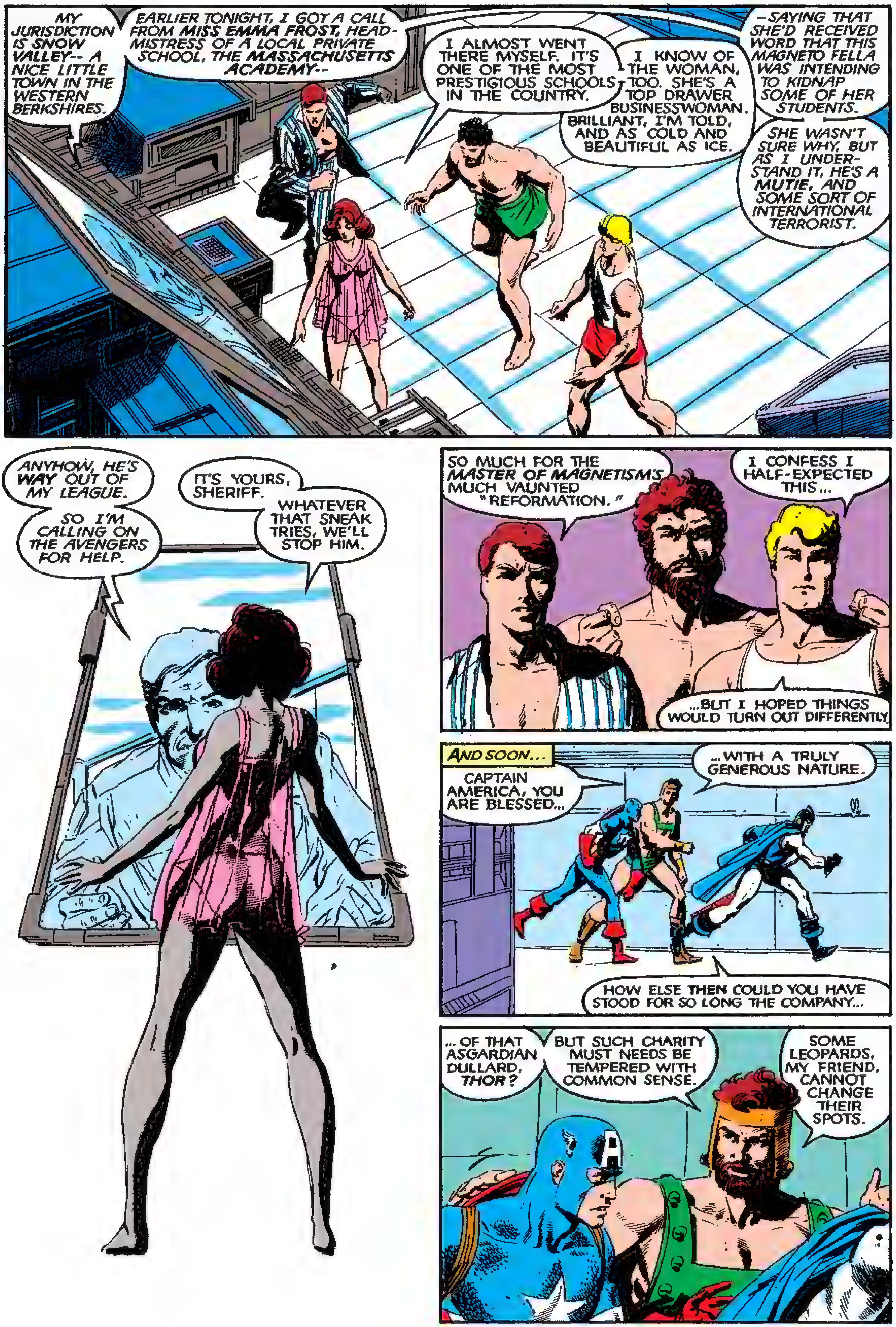
AVENGERS ASSEMBLE!

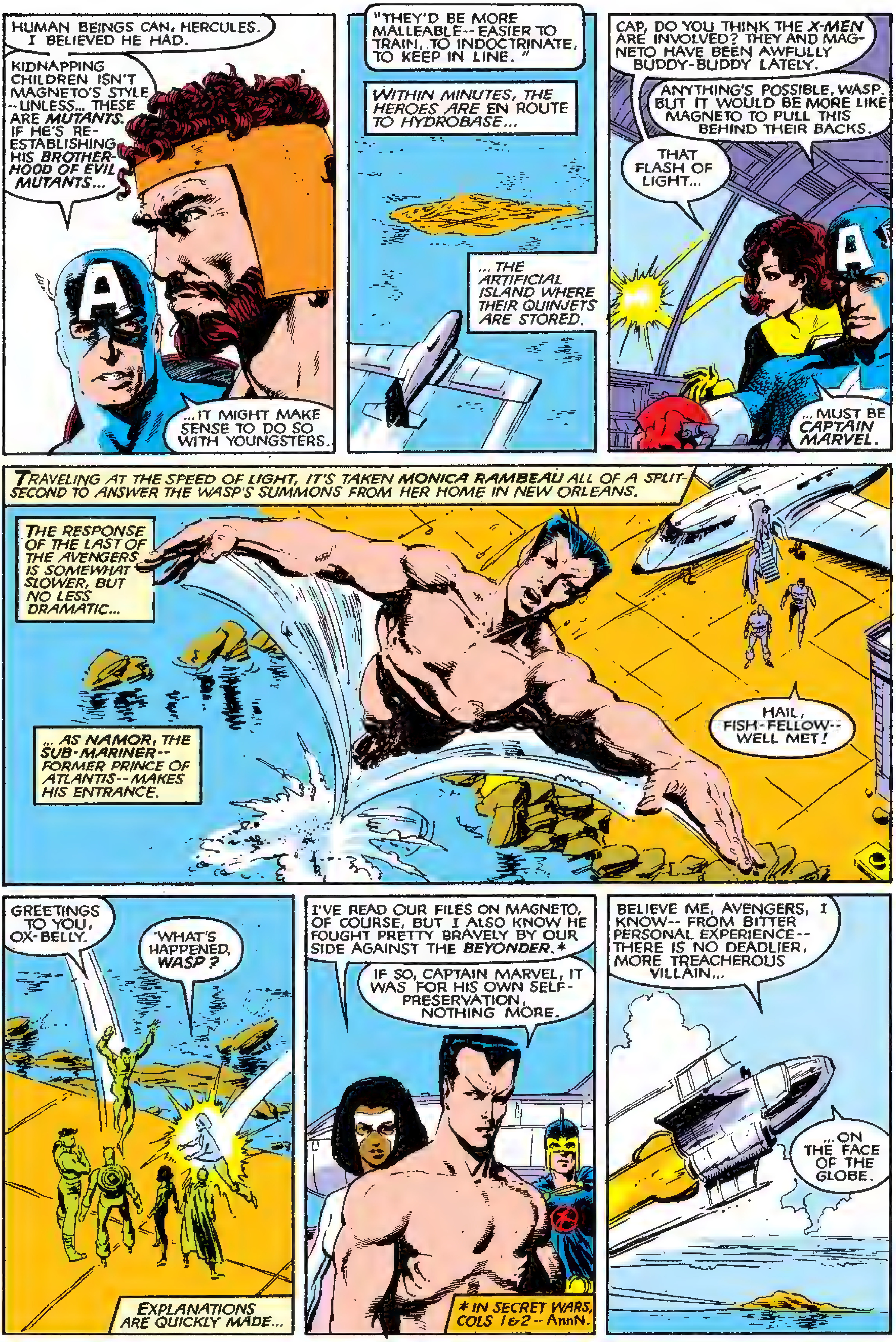
STARRING THE NEW MUTANTS

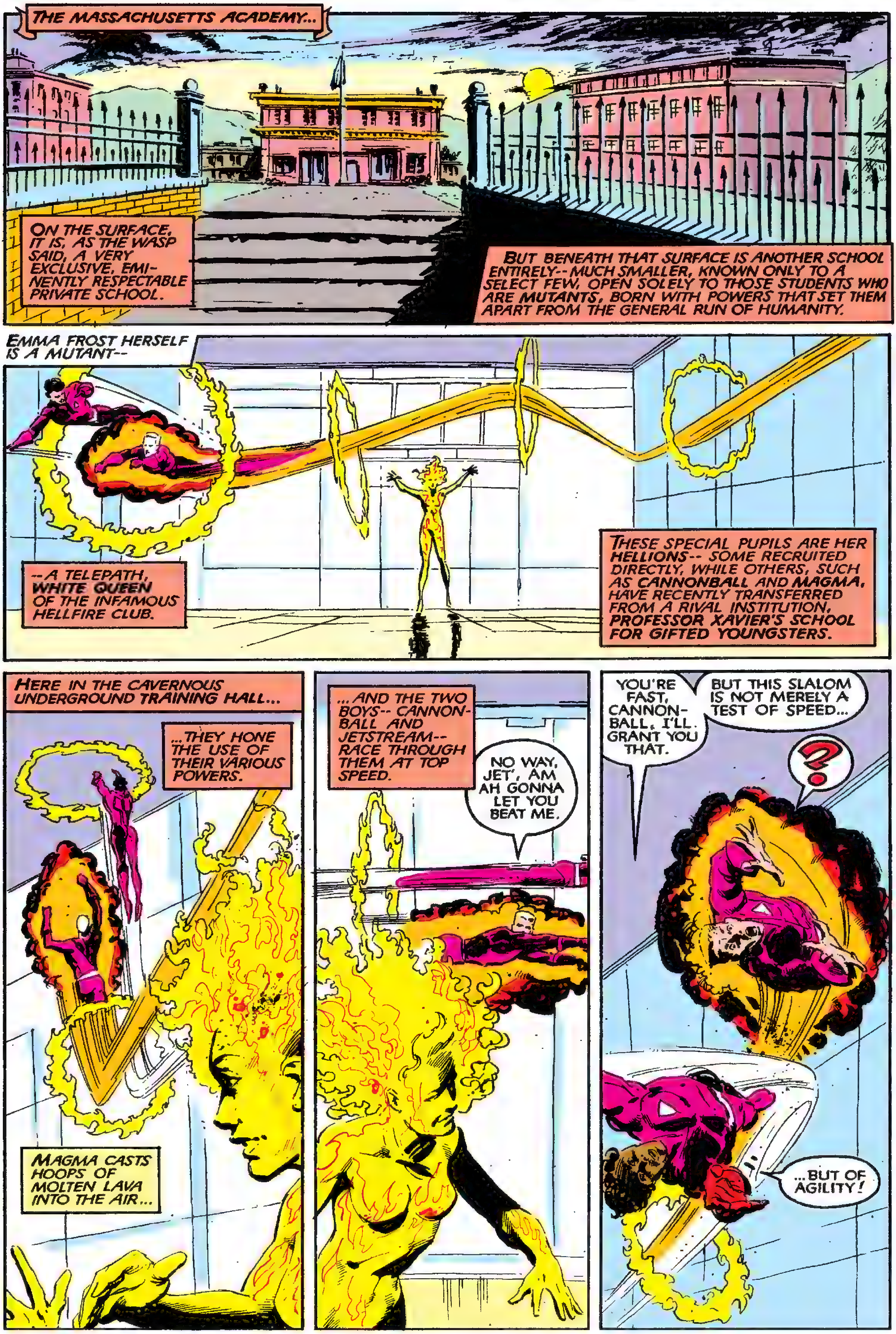
CHRIS CLAREMONT, WRITER
JACKSON GUICE, PENCILER
KYLE BAKER, INKER
MICHELLE WRIGHTSON, COLORIST
TOM ORZECHOWSKI, LETTERER
ANN NOCENTI, EDITOR
JIM SHOOTER, EDITOR IN CHIEF

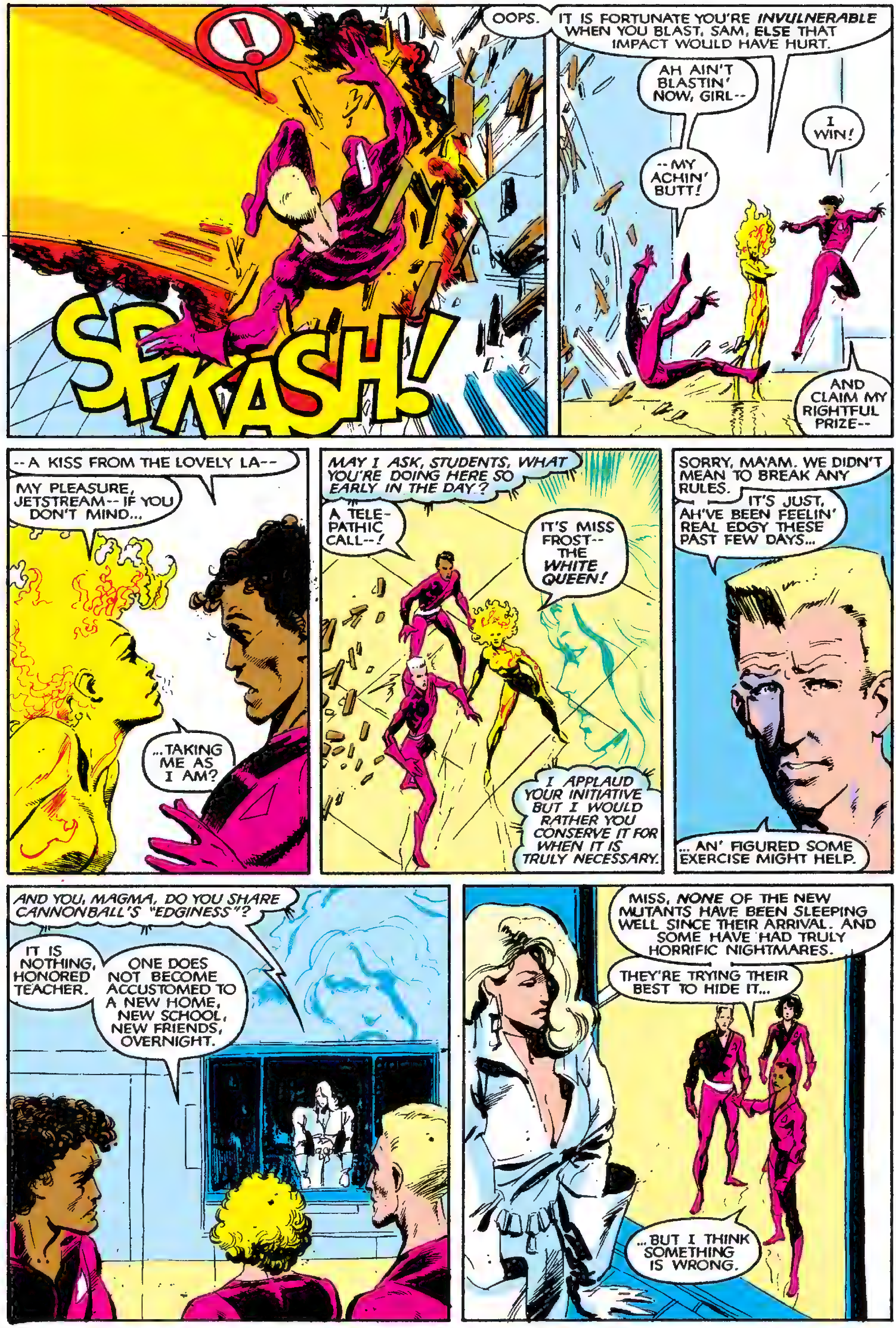
ON THE EAST SIDE OF MANHATTAN'S CENTRAL PARK STANDS WHAT IS ARGUABLY ONE OF THE MOST FAMOUS BUILDINGS ON EARTH--

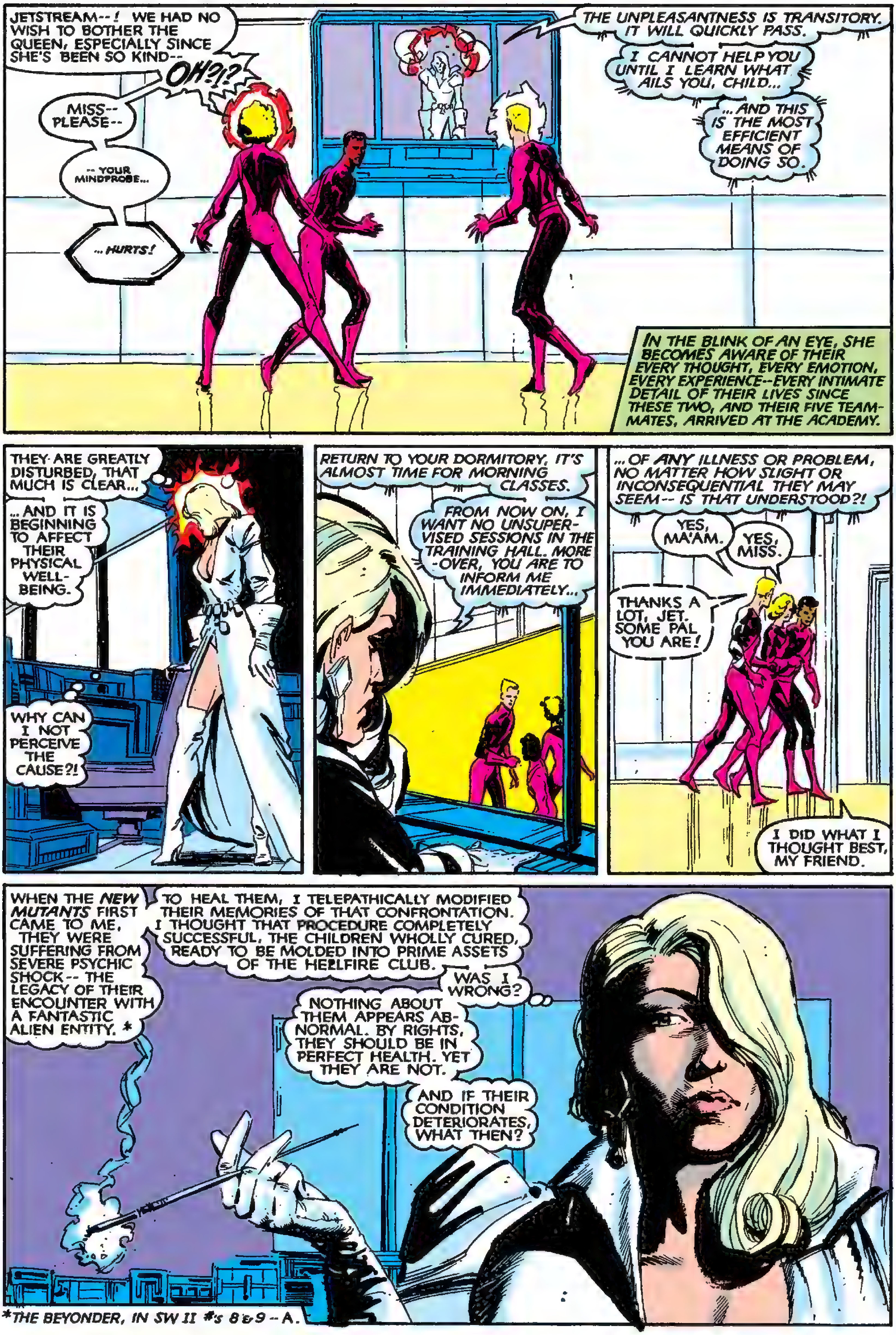

--AVENGERS MANSION--
--WHERE, ON THIS CRISP, CLEAR MID-WINTER EVENING, AS IT HAS SO OFTEN IN THE PAST, AN ALARM SOUNDS.
I'M, ah, REALLY SORRY TO, uh, BOTHER YOU SO LATE.
IT'S WHAT WE'RE HERE FOR, SHERIFF.
TROUBLE, WASP?
BY ZEUS--
--THE CALL TO BATTLE WILL EVER SOUND...
...AT THE MOST INCONVENIENT OF TIMES.
NOT TO WORRY, HERCULES.
THE VIDEOCOM SYSTEM IS PROGRAMMED TO SHOW OUR CALLERS COMPUTER GENERATED FACSIMILES OF US IN COSTUME, REGARDLESS OF HOW WE REALLY LOOK.
SETTLE DOWN, GENTLEMEN. SHERIFF BEATTY IS CALLING FROM MASSACHUSETTS STATE POLICE HEADQUARTERS--
--ABOUT MAGNETO!


MY JURISDICTION IS SNOW VALLEY-- A NICE LITTLE TOWN IN THE WESTERN BERKSHIRES.
EARLIER TONIGHT, I GOT A CALL FROM MISS EMMA FROST, HEADMISTRESS OF A LOCAL PRIVATE SCHOOL, THE MASSACHUSETTS ACADEMY--
I ALMOST WENT THERE MYSELF. IT'S ONE OF THE MOST PRESTIGIOUS SCHOOLS IN THE COUNTRY.
I KNOW OF THE WOMAN, TOO. SHE'S A TOP DRAWER BUSINESSWOMAN. BRILLIANT, I'M TOLD, AND AS COLD AND BEAUTIFUL AS ICE.
--SAYING THAT SHE'D RECEIVED WORD THAT THIS MAGNETO FELLA WAS INTENDING TO KIDNAP SOME OF HER STUDENTS.
SHE WASN'T SURE WHY, BUT AS I UNDERSTAND IT, HE'S A MUTIE, AND SOME SORT OF INTERNATIONAL TERRORIST.
ANYHOW, HE'S WAY OUT OF MY LEAGUE.
SO I'M CALLING ON THE AVENGERS FOR HELP.
IT'S YOURS, SHERIFF.
WHATEVER THAT SNEAK TRIES, WE'LL STOP HIM.
SO MUCH FOR THE MASTER OF MAGNETISM'S MUCH VAUNTED "REFORMATION."
I CONFESS I HALF-EXPECTED THIS...
...BUT I HOPED THINGS WOULD TURN OUT DIFFERENTLY.
AND SOON...
CAPTAIN AMERICA, YOU ARE BLESSED...
...WITH A TRULY GENEROUS NATURE.
HOW ELSE THEN COULD YOU HAVE STOOD FOR SO LONG THE COMPANY...
...OF THAT ASGARDIAN DULLARD, THOR?
BUT SUCH CHARITY MUST NEEDS BE TEMPERED WITH COMMON SENSE.
SOME LEOPARDS, MY FRIEND, CANNOT CHANGE THEIR SPOTS.

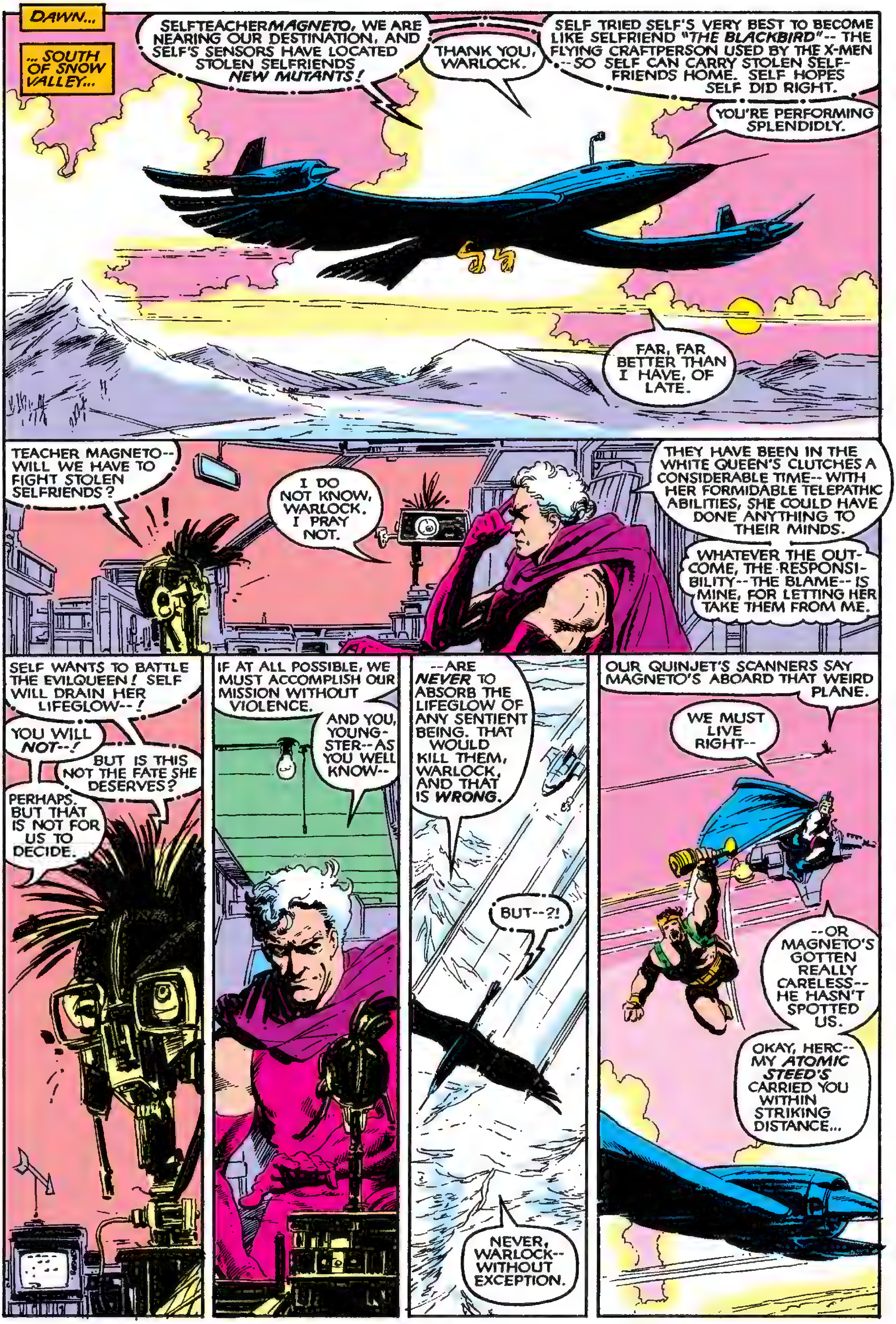

HUMAN BEINGS CAN, HERCULES. I BELIEVED HE HAD.
KIDNAPPING CHILDREN ISN'T MAGNETO'S STYLE --UNLESS... THESE ARE *MUTANTS*. IF HE'S RE-ESTABLISHING HIS *BROTHERHOOD OF EVIL MUTANTS*...
...IT MIGHT MAKE SENSE TO DO SO WITH YOUNGSTERS.
"THEY'D BE MORE MALLEABLE-- EASIER TO TRAIN, TO INDOCTRINATE, TO KEEP IN LINE."
WITHIN MINUTES, THE HEROES ARE EN ROUTE TO HYDROBASE...
...THE ARTIFICIAL ISLAND WHERE THEIR QUINJETS ARE STORED.
CAP, DO YOU THINK THE *X-MEN* ARE INVOLVED? THEY AND MAGNETO HAVE BEEN AWFULLY BUDDY-BUDDY LATELY.
ANYTHING'S POSSIBLE, WASP. BUT IT WOULD BE MORE LIKE MAGNETO TO PULL THIS BEHIND THEIR BACKS.
THAT FLASH OF LIGHT...
...MUST BE *CAPTAIN MARVEL*.
TRAVELING AT THE SPEED OF LIGHT, IT'S TAKEN MONICA RAMBEAU ALL OF A SPLIT-SECOND TO ANSWER THE WASP'S SUMMONS FROM HER HOME IN NEW ORLEANS.
THE RESPONSE OF THE LAST OF THE AVENGERS IS SOMEWHAT SLOWER, BUT NO LESS DRAMATIC...
...AS NAMOR, THE SUB-MARINER-- FORMER PRINCE OF ATLANTIS-- MAKES HIS ENTRANCE.
HAIL, FISH-FELLOW-- WELL MET!
GREETINGS TO YOU, OX-BELLY.
WHAT'S HAPPENED, *WASP?*
EXPLANATIONS ARE QUICKLY MADE...
I'VE READ OUR FILES ON MAGNETO, OF COURSE, BUT I ALSO KNOW HE FOUGHT PRETTY BRAVELY BY OUR SIDE AGAINST THE *BEYONDER*.*
IF SO, CAPTAIN MARVEL, IT WAS FOR HIS OWN SELF-PRESERVATION, NOTHING MORE.
**IN SECRET WARS, COLS 1&2 --AnnN.*
BELIEVE ME, AVENGERS, I KNOW-- FROM BITTER PERSONAL EXPERIENCE-- THERE IS NO DEADLIER, MORE TREACHEROUS VILLAIN...
...ON THE FACE OF THE GLOBE.

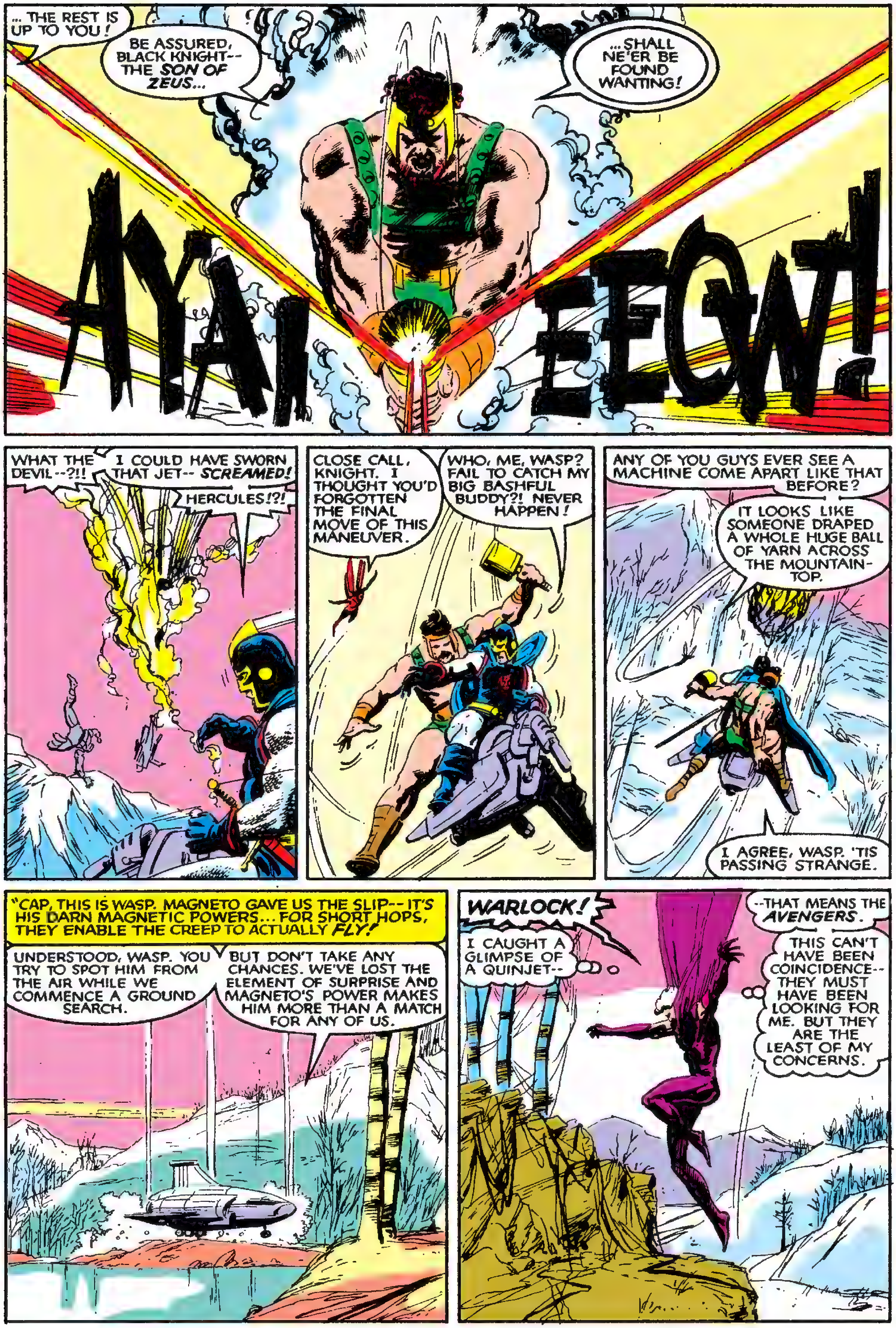

THE MASSACHUSETTS ACADEMY...
ON THE SURFACE, IT IS, AS THE WASP SAID, A VERY EXCLUSIVE, EMINENTLY RESPECTABLE PRIVATE SCHOOL.
BUT BENEATH THAT SURFACE IS ANOTHER SCHOOL ENTIRELY-- MUCH SMALLER, KNOWN ONLY TO A SELECT FEW, OPEN SOLELY TO THOSE STUDENTS WHO ARE MUTANTS, BORN WITH POWERS THAT SET THEM APART FROM THE GENERAL RUN OF HUMANITY.
EMMA FROST HERSELF IS A MUTANT--
--A TELEPATH, WHITE QUEEN OF THE INFAMOUS HELLFIRE CLUB.
THESE SPECIAL PUPILS ARE HER HELLIONS-- SOME RECRUITED DIRECTLY, WHILE OTHERS, SUCH AS CANNONBALL AND MAGMA, HAVE RECENTLY TRANSFERRED FROM A RIVAL INSTITUTION, PROFESSOR XAVIER'S SCHOOL FOR GIFTED YOUNGSTERS.
HERE IN THE CAVERNOUS UNDERGROUND TRAINING HALL...
...THEY HONE THE USE OF THEIR VARIOUS POWERS.
MAGMA CASTS HOOPS OF MOLTEN LAVA INTO THE AIR...
...AND THE TWO BOYS-- CANNONBALL AND JETSTREAM-- RACE THROUGH THEM AT TOP SPEED.
NO WAY, JET', AM AH GONNA LET YOU BEAT ME.
YOU'RE FAST, CANNONBALL, I'LL GRANT YOU THAT.
BUT THIS SLALOM IS NOT MERELY A TEST OF SPEED...
?
...BUT OF AGILITY!

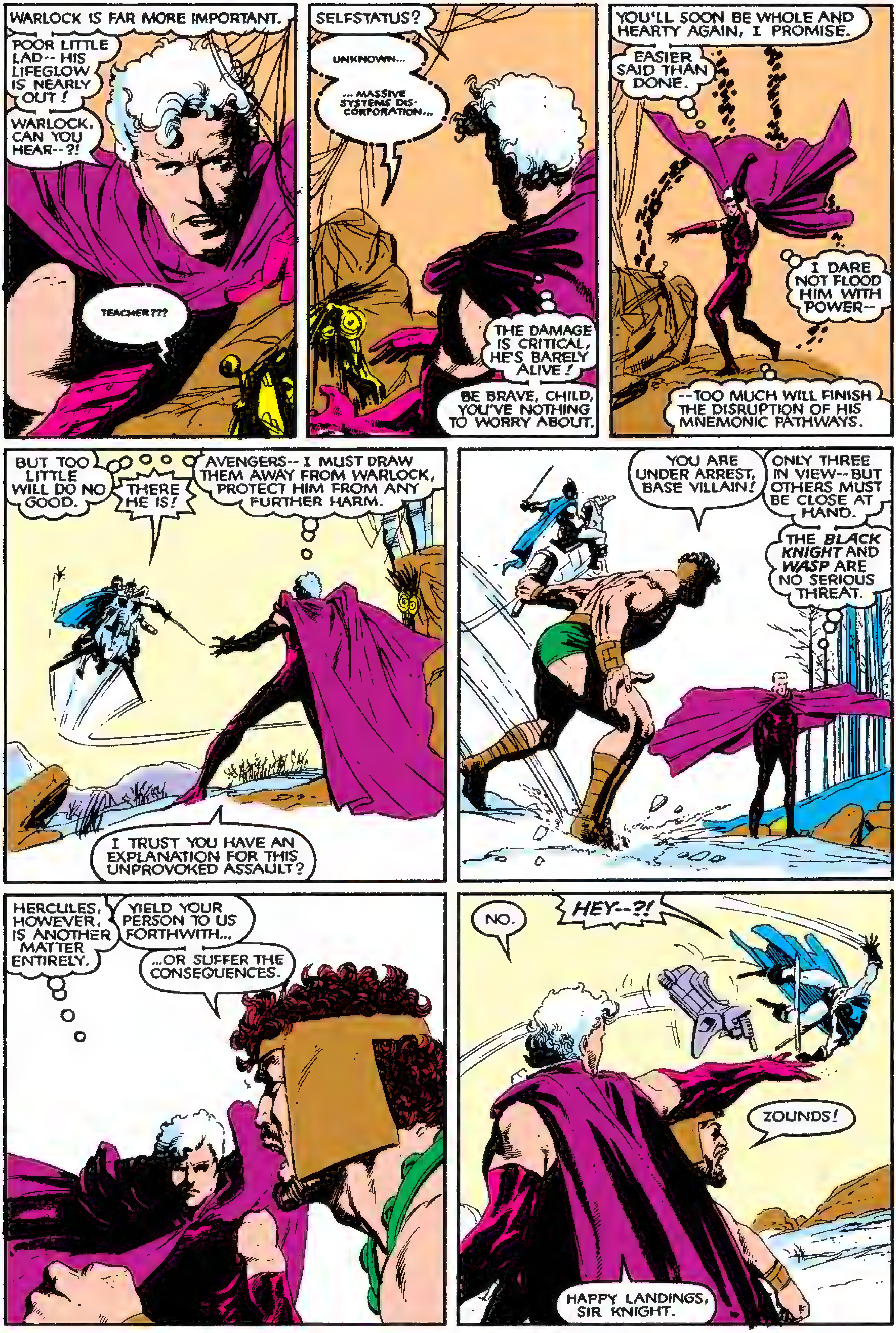

!
SPKASH!
OOPS.
IT IS FORTUNATE YOU'RE *INVULNERABLE* WHEN YOU BLAST, SAM, *ELSE* THAT IMPACT WOULD HAVE HURT.
AH AIN'T BLASTIN' NOW, GIRL--
--MY ACHIN' BUTT!
I WIN!
AND CLAIM MY RIGHTFUL PRIZE--
--A KISS FROM THE LOVELY LA--
MY PLEASURE, JETSTREAM-- IF YOU DON'T MIND...
...TAKING ME AS I AM?
MAY I ASK, STUDENTS, WHAT YOU'RE DOING HERE SO EARLY IN THE DAY?
A TELE-PATHIC CALL--!
IT'S MISS FROST-- THE *WHITE QUEEN!*
I APPLAUD YOUR INITIATIVE BUT I WOULD RATHER YOU CONSERVE IT FOR WHEN IT IS TRULY NECESSARY.
SORRY, MA'AM. WE DIDN'T MEAN TO BREAK ANY RULES.
IT'S JUST, AH'VE BEEN FEELIN' REAL EDGY THESE PAST FEW DAYS...
...AN' FIGURED SOME EXERCISE MIGHT HELP.
AND YOU, MAGMA, DO YOU SHARE CANNONBALL'S "EDGINESS"?
IT IS NOTHING, HONORED TEACHER.
ONE DOES NOT BECOME ACCUSTOMED TO A NEW HOME, NEW SCHOOL, NEW FRIENDS, OVERNIGHT.
MISS, *NONE* OF THE NEW MUTANTS HAVE BEEN SLEEPING WELL SINCE THEIR ARRIVAL. AND SOME HAVE HAD TRULY HORRIFIC NIGHTMARES.
THEY'RE TRYING THEIR BEST TO HIDE IT...
...BUT I THINK SOMETHING IS WRONG.

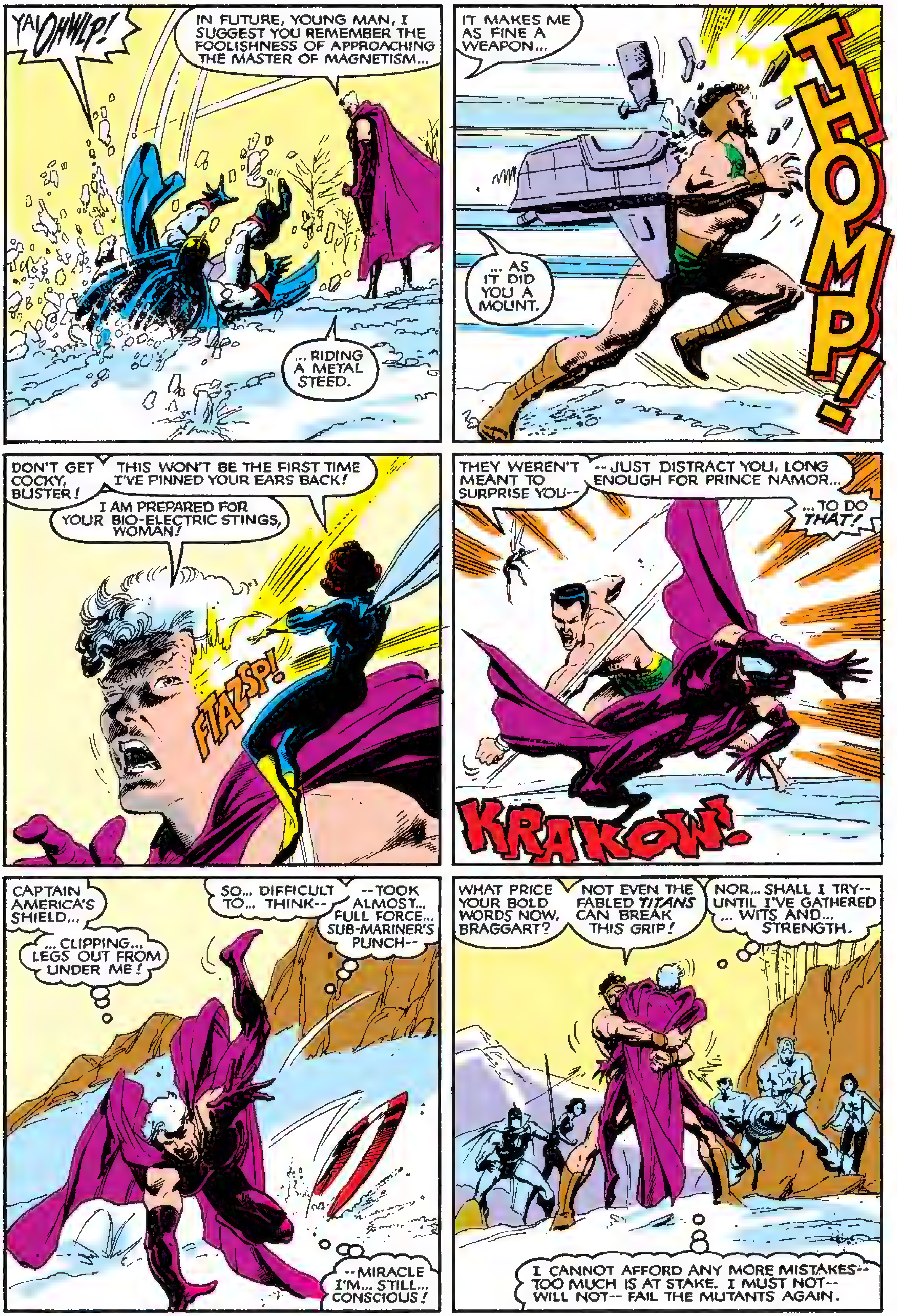

JETSTREAM--! WE HAD NO WISH TO BOTHER THE QUEEN, ESPECIALLY SINCE SHE'S BEEN SO KIND--
OH?!?
MISS-- PLEASE--
-- YOUR MINDPROBE...
...HURTS!
THE UNPLEASANTNESS IS TRANSITORY. IT WILL QUICKLY PASS.
I CANNOT HELP YOU UNTIL I LEARN WHAT AILS YOU, CHILD...
...AND THIS IS THE MOST EFFICIENT MEANS OF DOING SO.
IN THE BLINK OF AN EYE, SHE BECOMES AWARE OF THEIR EVERY THOUGHT, EVERY EMOTION, EVERY EXPERIENCE--EVERY INTIMATE DETAIL OF THEIR LIVES SINCE THESE TWO, AND THEIR FIVE TEAMMATES, ARRIVED AT THE ACADEMY.
THEY ARE GREATLY DISTURBED, THAT MUCH IS CLEAR...
...AND IT IS BEGINNING TO AFFECT THEIR PHYSICAL WELL-BEING.
WHY CAN I NOT PERCEIVE THE CAUSE?!
RETURN TO YOUR DORMITORY, IT'S ALMOST TIME FOR MORNING CLASSES.
FROM NOW ON, I WANT NO UNSUPERVISED SESSIONS IN THE TRAINING HALL. MOREOVER, YOU ARE TO INFORM ME IMMEDIATELY...
...OF ANY ILLNESS OR PROBLEM, NO MATTER HOW SLIGHT OR INCONSEQUENTIAL THEY MAY SEEM-- IS THAT UNDERSTOOD?!
YES, MA'AM.
YES, MISS.
THANKS A LOT, JET. SOME PAL YOU ARE!
I DID WHAT I THOUGHT BEST, MY FRIEND.
WHEN THE NEW MUTANTS FIRST CAME TO ME, THEY WERE SUFFERING FROM SEVERE PSYCHIC SHOCK-- THE LEGACY OF THEIR ENCOUNTER WITH A FANTASTIC ALIEN ENTITY.*
TO HEAL THEM, I TELEPATHICALLY MODIFIED THEIR MEMORIES OF THAT CONFRONTATION. I THOUGHT THAT PROCEDURE COMPLETELY SUCCESSFUL, THE CHILDREN WHOLLY CURED, READY TO BE MOLDED INTO PRIME ASSETS OF THE HELLFIRE CLUB.
WAS I WRONG?
NOTHING ABOUT THEM APPEARS ABNORMAL. BY RIGHTS, THEY SHOULD BE IN PERFECT HEALTH. YET THEY ARE NOT.
AND IF THEIR CONDITION DETERIORATES, WHAT THEN?

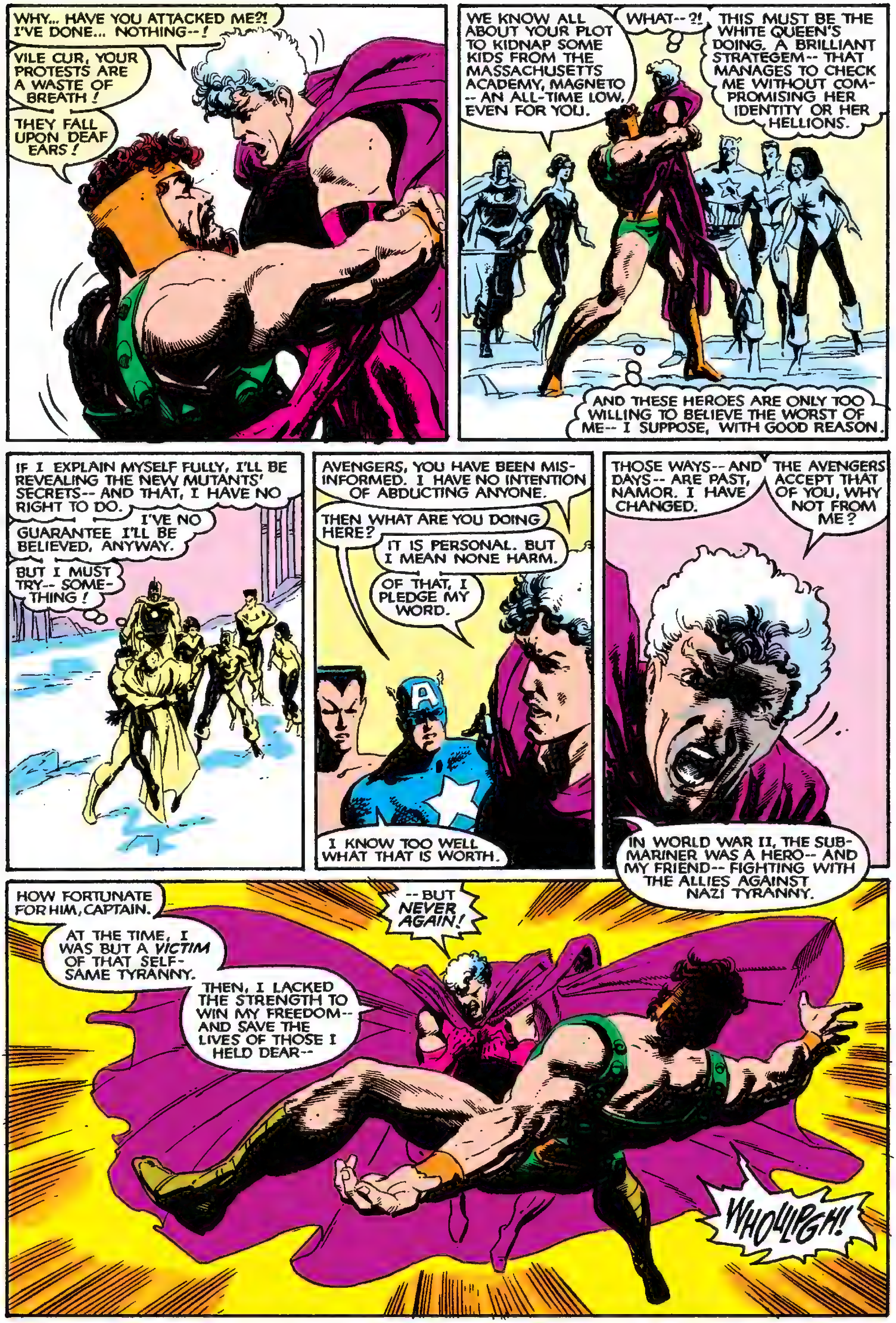
*THE BEYONDER, IN SW II #'s 8 & 9 -- A.

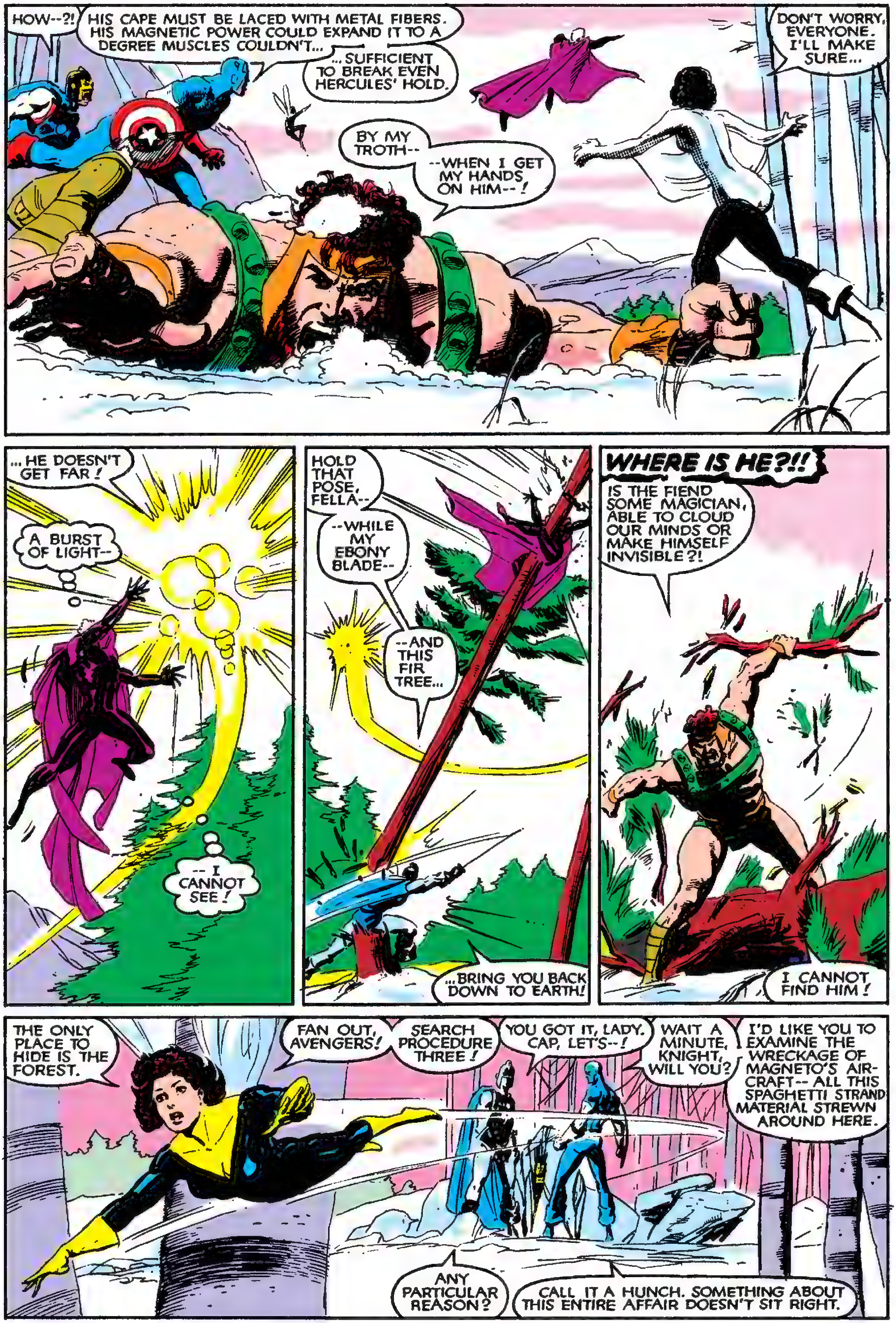

DAWN...
...SOUTH OF SNOW VALLEY...
SELFTEACHER MAGNETO, WE ARE NEARING OUR DESTINATION, AND SELF'S SENSORS HAVE LOCATED STOLEN SELFRIENDS NEW MUTANTS!
THANK YOU, WARLOCK.
SELF TRIED SELF'S VERY BEST TO BECOME LIKE SELFRIEND "THE BLACKBIRD"-- THE FLYING CRAFTPERSON USED BY THE X-MEN --SO SELF CAN CARRY STOLEN SELF-FRIENDS HOME. SELF HOPES SELF DID RIGHT.
YOU'RE PERFORMING SPLENDIDLY.
FAR, FAR BETTER THAN I HAVE, OF LATE.
TEACHER MAGNETO-- WILL WE HAVE TO FIGHT STOLEN SELFRIENDS?
!!
I DO NOT KNOW, WARLOCK. I PRAY NOT.
THEY HAVE BEEN IN THE WHITE QUEEN'S CLUTCHES A CONSIDERABLE TIME-- WITH HER FORMIDABLE TELEPATHIC ABILITIES, SHE COULD HAVE DONE ANYTHING TO THEIR MINDS.
WHATEVER THE OUTCOME, THE RESPONSIBILITY-- THE BLAME-- IS MINE, FOR LETTING HER TAKE THEM FROM ME.
SELF WANTS TO BATTLE THE EVILQUEEN! SELF WILL DRAIN HER LIFEGLOW--!
YOU WILL NOT--!
BUT IS THIS NOT THE FATE SHE DESERVES?
PERHAPS. BUT THAT IS NOT FOR US TO DECIDE.
IF AT ALL POSSIBLE, WE MUST ACCOMPLISH OUR MISSION WITHOUT VIOLENCE.
AND YOU, YOUNGSTER-- AS YOU WELL KNOW--
--ARE NEVER TO ABSORB THE LIFEGLOW OF ANY SENTIENT BEING. THAT WOULD KILL THEM, WARLOCK, AND THAT IS WRONG.
BUT--?!
NEVER, WARLOCK-- WITHOUT EXCEPTION.
OUR QUINJET'S SCANNERS SAY MAGNETO'S ABOARD THAT WEIRD PLANE.
WE MUST LIVE RIGHT--
--OR MAGNETO'S GOTTEN REALLY CARELESS-- HE HASN'T SPOTTED US.
OKAY, HERC-- MY ATOMIC STEED'S CARRIED YOU WITHIN STRIKING DISTANCE...

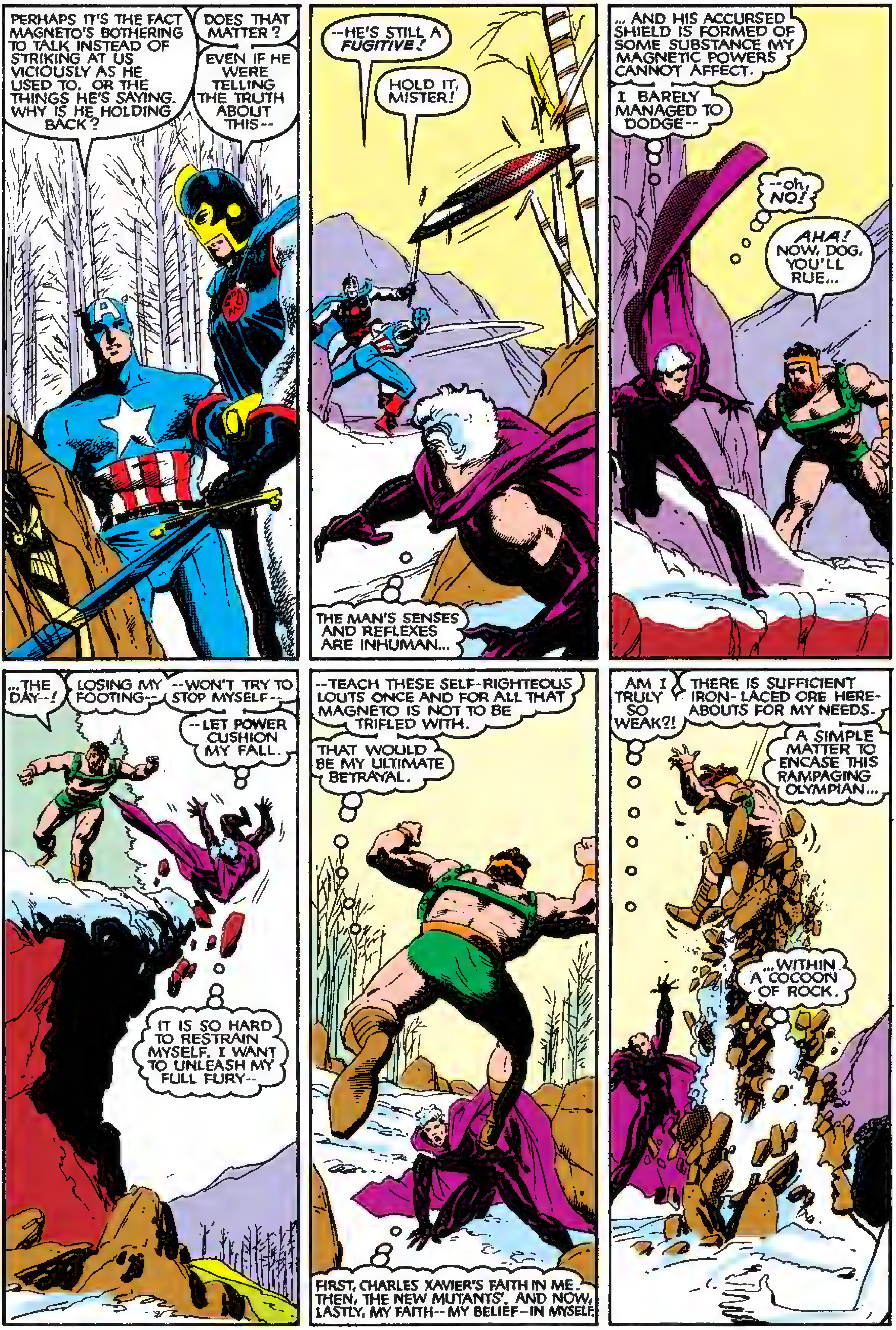

... THE REST IS UP TO YOU!
BE ASSURED, BLACK KNIGHT-- THE SON OF ZEUS...
...SHALL NE'ER BE FOUND WANTING!
AYAI EEGW!
WHAT THE DEVIL--?!!
I COULD HAVE SWORN THAT JET-- SCREAMED!
HERCULES!?!
CLOSE CALL, KNIGHT. I THOUGHT YOU'D FORGOTTEN THE FINAL MOVE OF THIS MANEUVER.
WHO, ME, WASP? FAIL TO CATCH MY BIG BASHFUL BUDDY?! NEVER HAPPEN!
ANY OF YOU GUYS EVER SEE A MACHINE COME APART LIKE THAT BEFORE?
IT LOOKS LIKE SOMEONE DRAPED A WHOLE HUGE BALL OF YARN ACROSS THE MOUNTAIN-TOP.
I AGREE, WASP. 'TIS PASSING STRANGE.
"CAP, THIS IS WASP. MAGNETO GAVE US THE SLIP-- IT'S HIS DARN MAGNETIC POWERS... FOR SHORT HOPS, THEY ENABLE THE CREEP TO ACTUALLY FLY!"
UNDERSTOOD, WASP. YOU TRY TO SPOT HIM FROM THE AIR WHILE WE COMMENCE A GROUND SEARCH.
BUT DON'T TAKE ANY CHANCES. WE'VE LOST THE ELEMENT OF SURPRISE AND MAGNETO'S POWER MAKES HIM MORE THAN A MATCH FOR ANY OF US.
WARLOCK!
I CAUGHT A GLIMPSE OF A QUINJET--
--THAT MEANS THE AVENGERS.
THIS CAN'T HAVE BEEN COINCIDENCE-- THEY MUST HAVE BEEN LOOKING FOR ME. BUT THEY ARE THE LEAST OF MY CONCERNS.

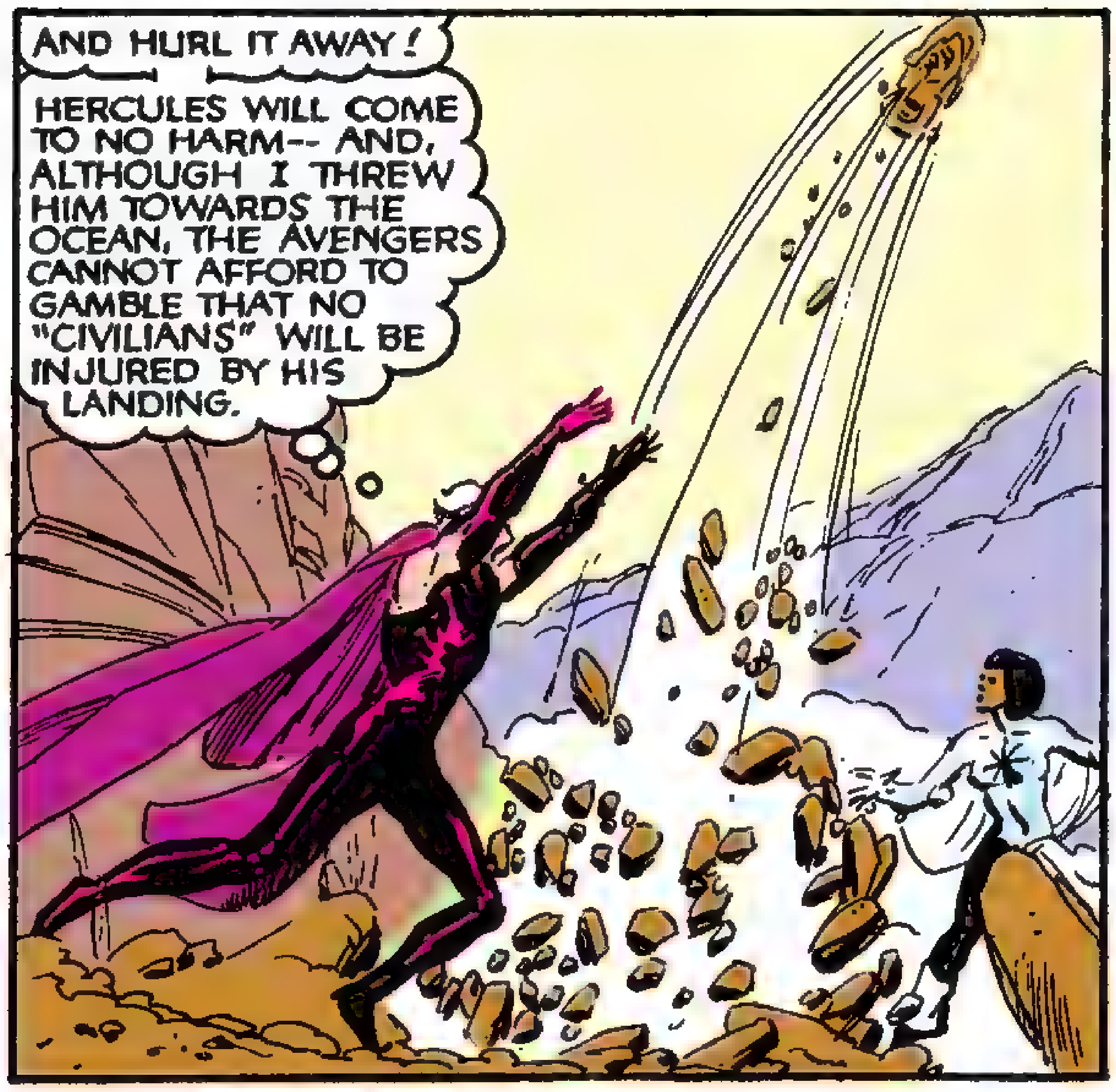

WARLOCK IS FAR MORE IMPORTANT.
POOR LITTLE LAD-- HIS LIFEGLOW IS NEARLY OUT!
WARLOCK, CAN YOU HEAR--?!
TEACHER???
SELFSTATUS?
UNKNOWN...
...MASSIVE SYSTEMS DIS-CORPORATION...
THE DAMAGE IS CRITICAL, HE'S BARELY ALIVE!
BE BRAVE, CHILD, YOU'VE NOTHING TO WORRY ABOUT.
YOU'LL SOON BE WHOLE AND HEARTY AGAIN, I PROMISE.
EASIER SAID THAN DONE.
I DARE NOT FLOOD HIM WITH POWER--
--TOO MUCH WILL FINISH THE DISRUPTION OF HIS MNEMONIC PATHWAYS.
BUT TOO LITTLE WILL DO NO GOOD.
THERE HE IS!
AVENGERS-- I MUST DRAW THEM AWAY FROM WARLOCK, PROTECT HIM FROM ANY FURTHER HARM.
I TRUST YOU HAVE AN EXPLANATION FOR THIS UNPROVOKED ASSAULT?
YOU ARE UNDER ARREST, BASE VILLAIN!
ONLY THREE IN VIEW--BUT OTHERS MUST BE CLOSE AT HAND.
THE BLACK KNIGHT AND WASP ARE NO SERIOUS THREAT.
HERCULES, HOWEVER, IS ANOTHER MATTER ENTIRELY.
YIELD YOUR PERSON TO US FORTHWITH...
...OR SUFFER THE CONSEQUENCES.
NO.
HEY--?!
ZOUNDS!
HAPPY LANDINGS, SIR KNIGHT.

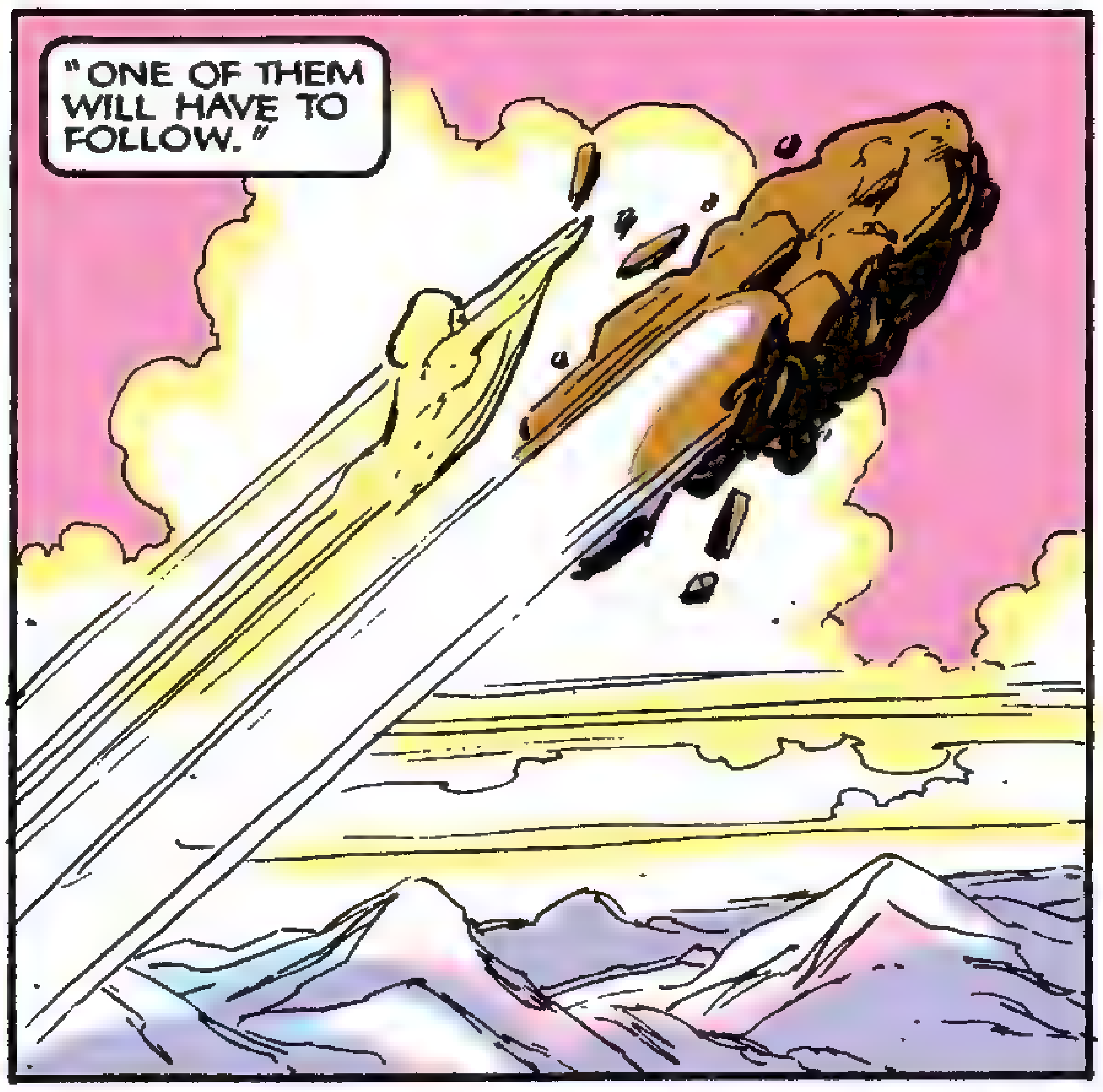

YA! OHWLP!
IN FUTURE, YOUNG MAN, I SUGGEST YOU REMEMBER THE FOOLISHNESS OF APPROACHING THE MASTER OF MAGNETISM...
... RIDING A METAL STEED.
IT MAKES ME AS FINE A WEAPON...
... AS IT DID YOU A MOUNT.
THOMP!
DON'T GET COCKY, BUSTER!
THIS WON'T BE THE FIRST TIME I'VE PINNED YOUR EARS BACK!
I AM PREPARED FOR YOUR BIO-ELECTRIC STINGS, WOMAN!
FTAZSP!
THEY WEREN'T MEANT TO SURPRISE YOU--
--JUST DISTRACT YOU, LONG ENOUGH FOR PRINCE NAMOR...
...TO DO THAT!
KRAKOW!
CAPTAIN AMERICA'S SHIELD...
... CLIPPING... LEGS OUT FROM UNDER ME!
SO... DIFFICULT TO... THINK--
--TOOK ALMOST... FULL FORCE... SUB-MARINER'S PUNCH--
--MIRACLE I'M... STILL... CONSCIOUS!
WHAT PRICE YOUR BOLD WORDS NOW, BRAGGART?
NOT EVEN THE FABLED TITANS CAN BREAK THIS GRIP!
NOR... SHALL I TRY-- UNTIL I'VE GATHERED ... WITS AND... STRENGTH.
I CANNOT AFFORD ANY MORE MISTAKES-- TOO MUCH IS AT STAKE. I MUST NOT-- WILL NOT-- FAIL THE MUTANTS AGAIN.

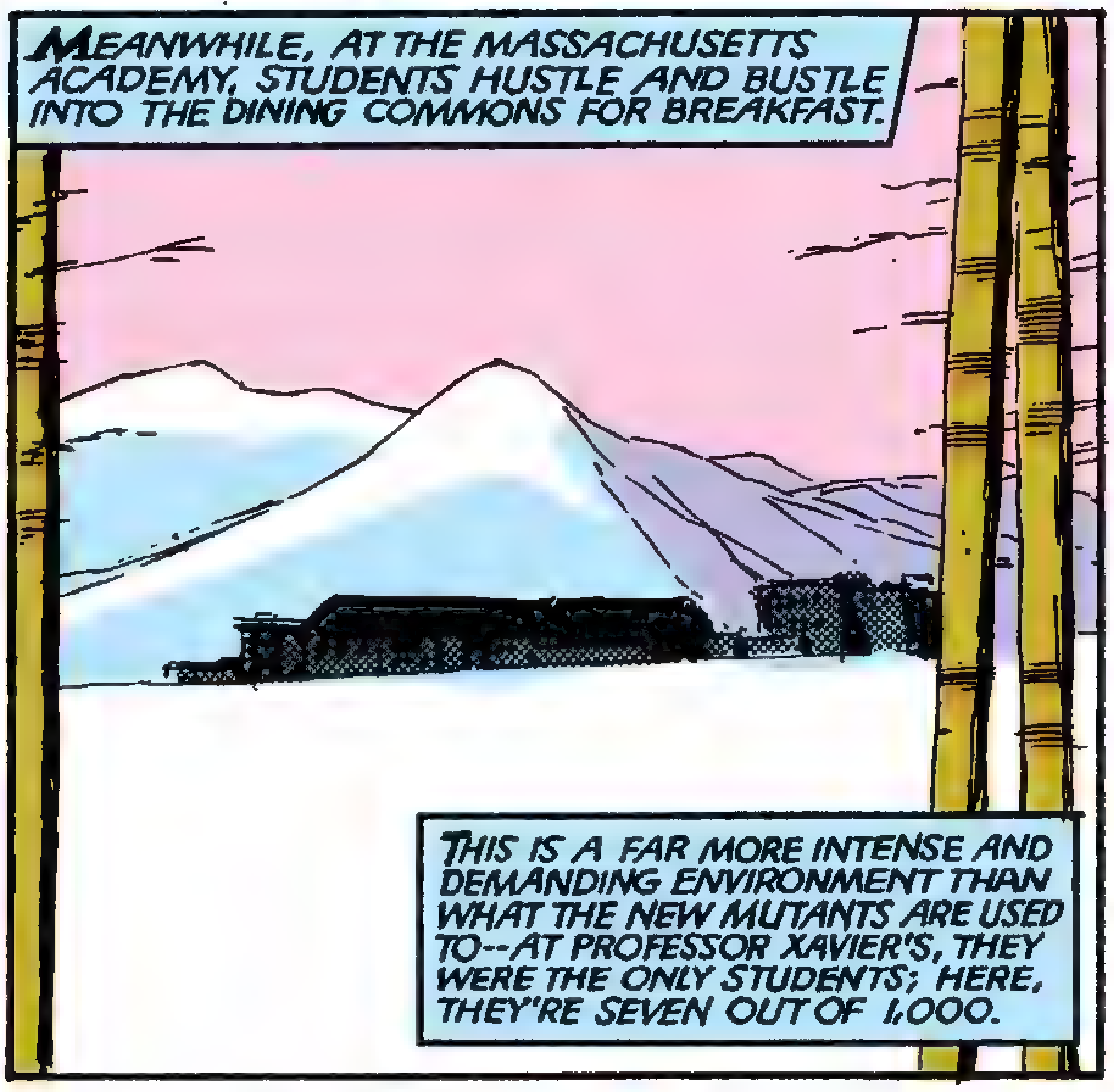

WHY... HAVE YOU ATTACKED ME?! I'VE DONE... NOTHING--!
VILE CUR, YOUR PROTESTS ARE A WASTE OF BREATH!
THEY FALL UPON DEAF EARS!
WE KNOW ALL ABOUT YOUR PLOT TO KIDNAP SOME KIDS FROM THE MASSACHUSETTS ACADEMY, MAGNETO -- AN ALL-TIME LOW, EVEN FOR YOU.
WHAT--?!
THIS MUST BE THE WHITE QUEEN'S DOING. A BRILLIANT STRATEGEM-- THAT MANAGES TO CHECK ME WITHOUT COMPROMISING HER IDENTITY OR HER HELLIONS.
AND THESE HEROES ARE ONLY TOO WILLING TO BELIEVE THE WORST OF ME-- I SUPPOSE, WITH GOOD REASON.
IF I EXPLAIN MYSELF FULLY, I'LL BE REVEALING THE NEW MUTANTS' SECRETS-- AND THAT, I HAVE NO RIGHT TO DO.
I'VE NO GUARANTEE I'LL BE BELIEVED, ANYWAY.
BUT I MUST TRY-- SOMETHING!
AVENGERS, YOU HAVE BEEN MISINFORMED. I HAVE NO INTENTION OF ABDUCTING ANYONE.
THEN WHAT ARE YOU DOING HERE?
IT IS PERSONAL. BUT I MEAN NONE HARM.
OF THAT, I PLEDGE MY WORD.
I KNOW TOO WELL WHAT THAT IS WORTH.
THOSE WAYS-- AND DAYS-- ARE PAST, NAMOR. I HAVE CHANGED.
THE AVENGERS ACCEPT THAT OF YOU, WHY NOT FROM ME?
IN WORLD WAR II, THE SUB-MARINER WAS A HERO-- AND MY FRIEND-- FIGHTING WITH THE ALLIES AGAINST NAZI TYRANNY.
HOW FORTUNATE FOR HIM, CAPTAIN.
AT THE TIME, I WAS BUT A *VICTIM* OF THAT SELF-SAME TYRANNY.
THEN, I LACKED THE STRENGTH TO WIN MY FREEDOM-- AND SAVE THE LIVES OF THOSE I HELD DEAR--
-- BUT *NEVER AGAIN!*
WHOOLLPGH!

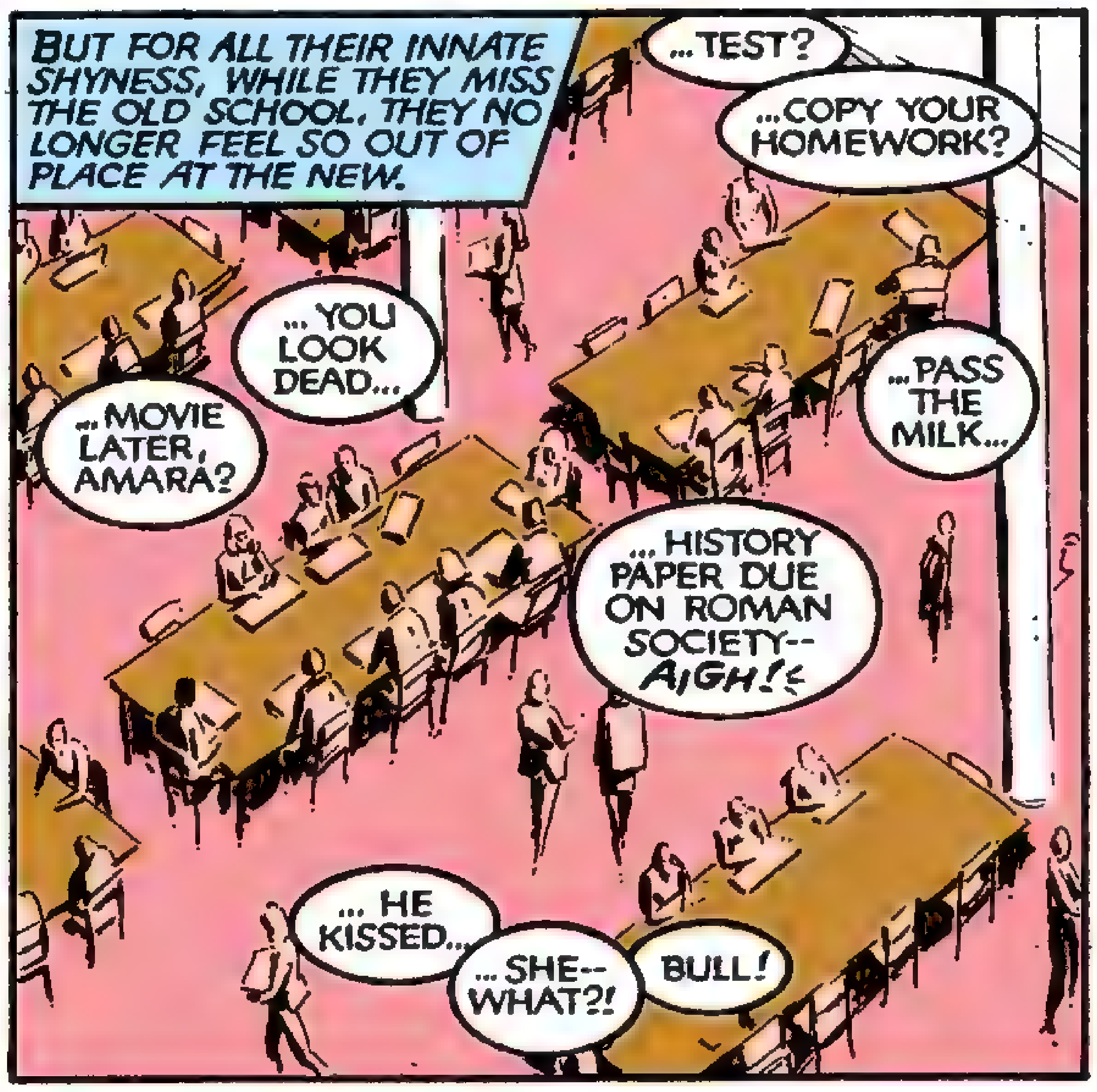

HOW--?!
HIS CAPE MUST BE LACED WITH METAL FIBERS. HIS MAGNETIC POWER COULD EXPAND IT TO A DEGREE MUSCLES COULDN'T...
...SUFFICIENT TO BREAK EVEN HERCULES' HOLD.
BY MY TROTH--
--WHEN I GET MY HANDS ON HIM--!
DON'T WORRY, EVERYONE. I'LL MAKE SURE...
...HE DOESN'T GET FAR!
A BURST OF LIGHT--
-- I CANNOT SEE!
HOLD THAT POSE, FELLA--
--WHILE MY EBONY BLADE--
--AND THIS FIR TREE...
...BRING YOU BACK DOWN TO EARTH!
WHERE IS HE?!!
IS THE FIEND SOME MAGICIAN, ABLE TO CLOUD OUR MINDS OR MAKE HIMSELF INVISIBLE?!
I CANNOT FIND HIM!
THE ONLY PLACE TO HIDE IS THE FOREST.
FAN OUT, AVENGERS!
SEARCH PROCEDURE THREE!
YOU GOT IT, LADY. CAP, LET'S--!
WAIT A MINUTE, KNIGHT, WILL YOU?
I'D LIKE YOU TO EXAMINE THE WRECKAGE OF MAGNETO'S AIRCRAFT-- ALL THIS SPAGHETTI STRAND MATERIAL STREWN AROUND HERE.
ANY PARTICULAR REASON?
CALL IT A HUNCH. SOMETHING ABOUT THIS ENTIRE AFFAIR DOESN'T SIT RIGHT.

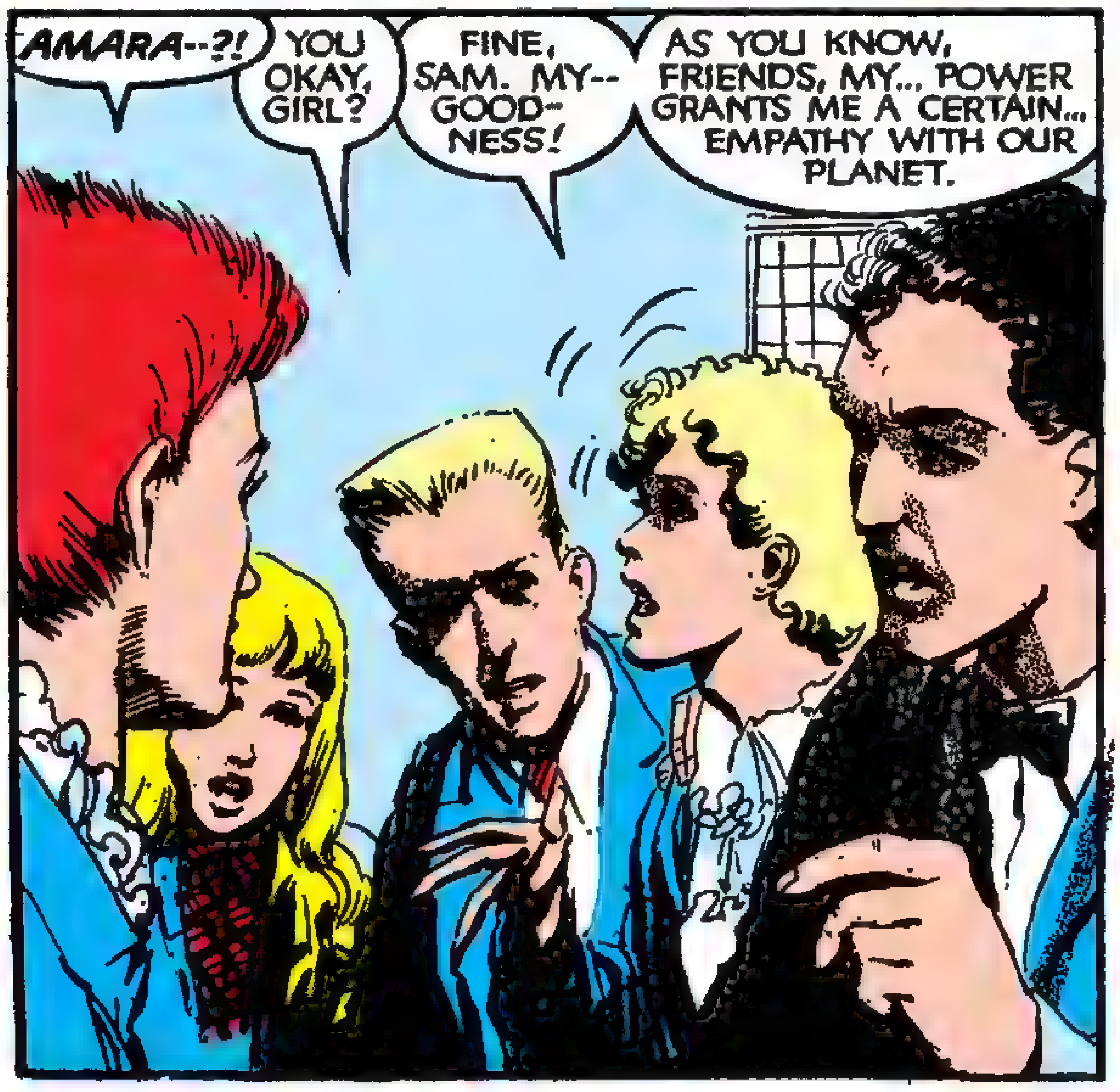

PERHAPS IT'S THE FACT MAGNETO'S BOTHERING TO TALK INSTEAD OF STRIKING AT US VICIOUSLY AS HE USED TO. OR THE THINGS HE'S SAYING. WHY IS HE HOLDING BACK?
DOES THAT MATTER?
EVEN IF HE WERE TELLING THE TRUTH ABOUT THIS--
--HE'S STILL A *FUGITIVE!*
HOLD IT, MISTER!
THE MAN'S SENSES AND REFLEXES ARE INHUMAN...
... AND HIS ACCURSED SHIELD IS FORMED OF SOME SUBSTANCE MY MAGNETIC POWERS CANNOT AFFECT.
I BARELY MANAGED TO DODGE--
--oh, *NO!*
AHA! NOW, DOG, YOU'LL RUE...
...THE DAY--!
LOSING MY FOOTING--
--WON'T TRY TO STOP MYSELF--
--LET POWER CUSHION MY FALL.
IT IS SO HARD TO RESTRAIN MYSELF. I WANT TO UNLEASH MY FULL FURY--
--TEACH THESE SELF-RIGHTEOUS LOUTS ONCE AND FOR ALL THAT MAGNETO IS NOT TO BE TRIFLED WITH.
THAT WOULD BE MY ULTIMATE BETRAYAL.
FIRST, CHARLES XAVIER'S FAITH IN ME. THEN, THE NEW MUTANTS'. AND NOW, LASTLY, MY FAITH-- MY BELIEF--IN MYSELF.
AM I TRULY SO WEAK?!
THERE IS SUFFICIENT IRON- LACED ORE HERE-ABOUTS FOR MY NEEDS.
A SIMPLE MATTER TO ENCASE THIS RAMPAGING OLYMPIAN...
...WITHIN A COCOON OF ROCK.

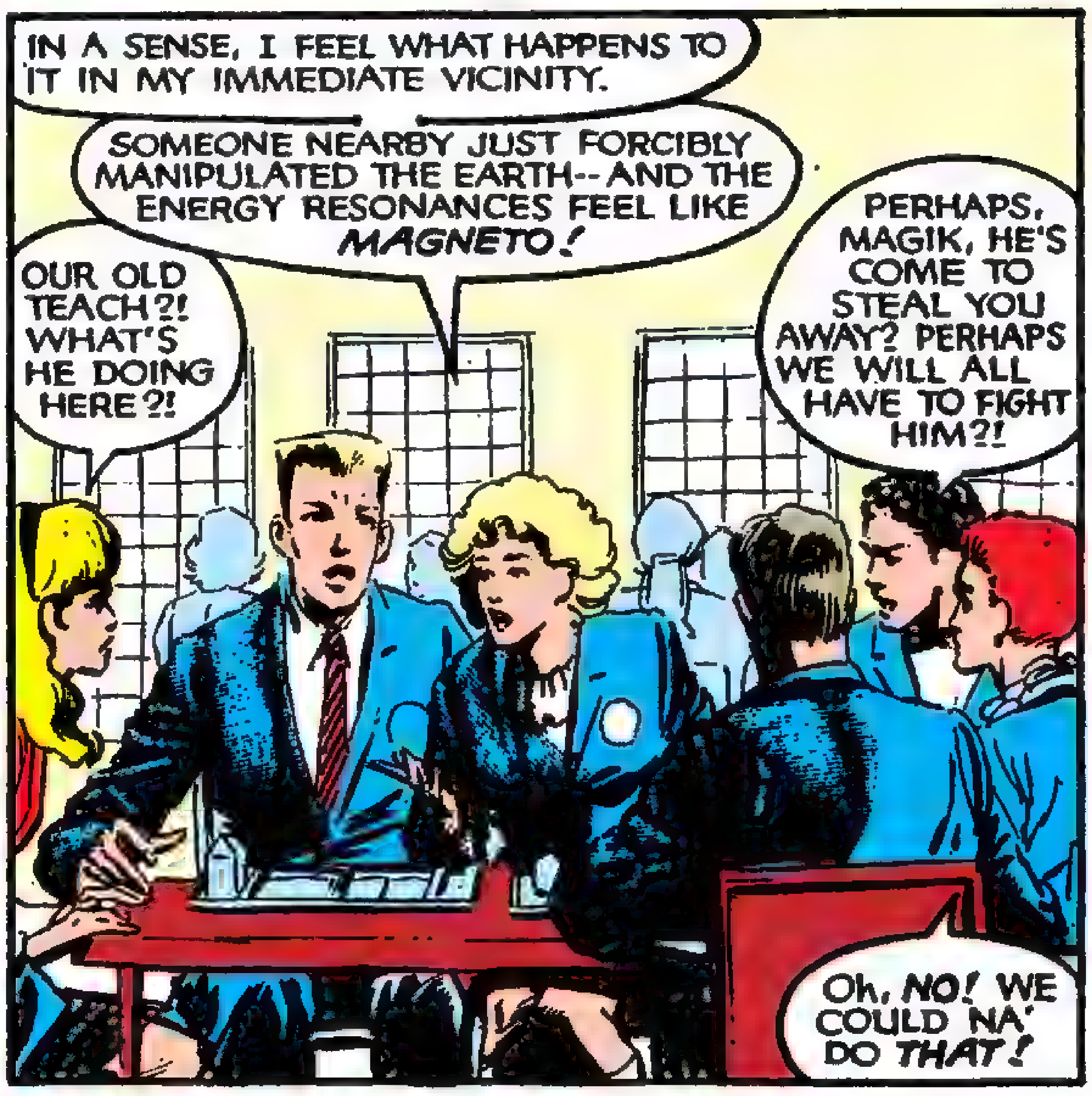

AND HURL IT AWAY!
HERCULES WILL COME TO NO HARM-- AND, ALTHOUGH I THREW HIM TOWARDS THE OCEAN, THE AVENGERS CANNOT AFFORD TO GAMBLE THAT NO "CIVILIANS" WILL BE INJURED BY HIS LANDING.

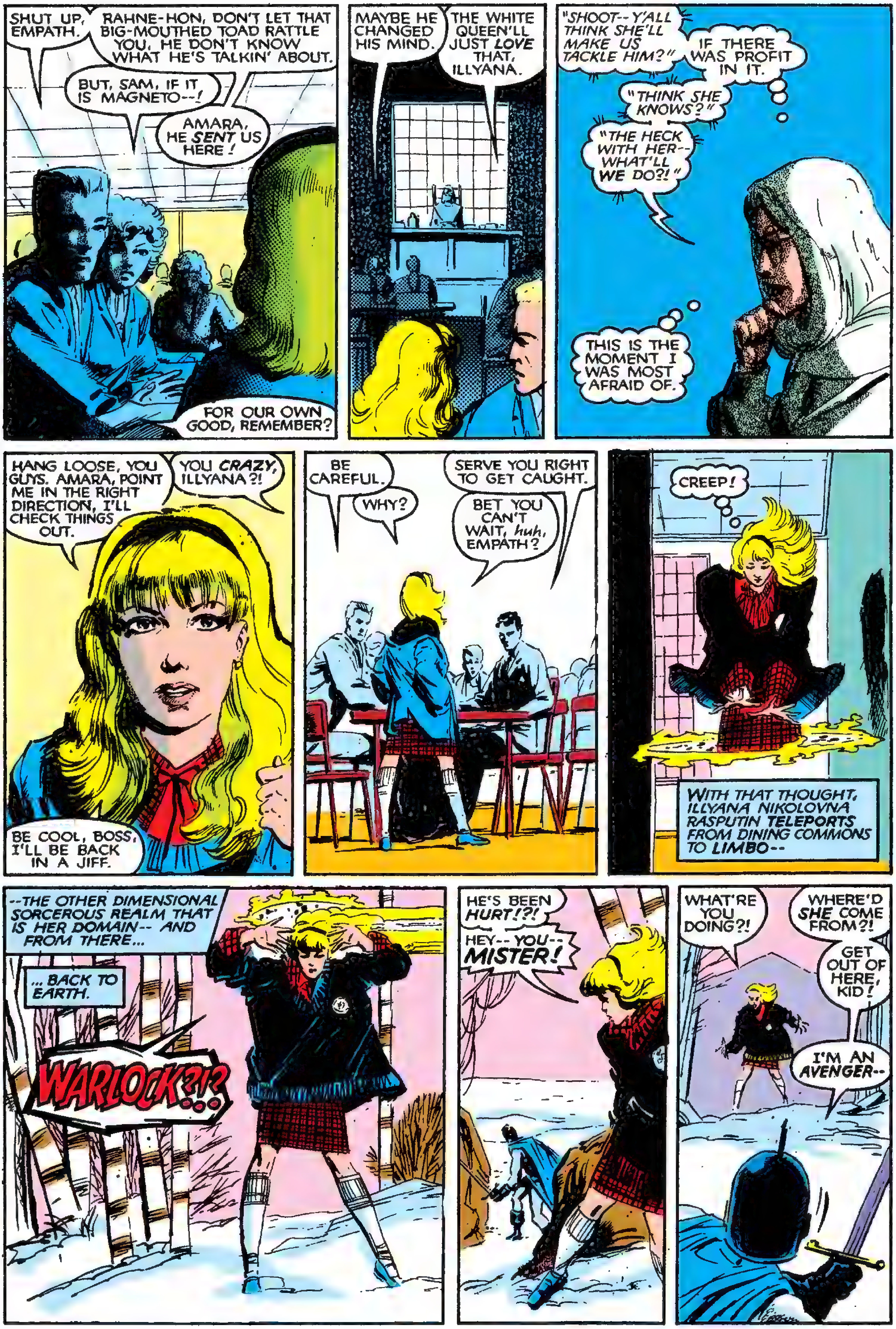

"ONE OF THEM WILL HAVE TO FOLLOW."

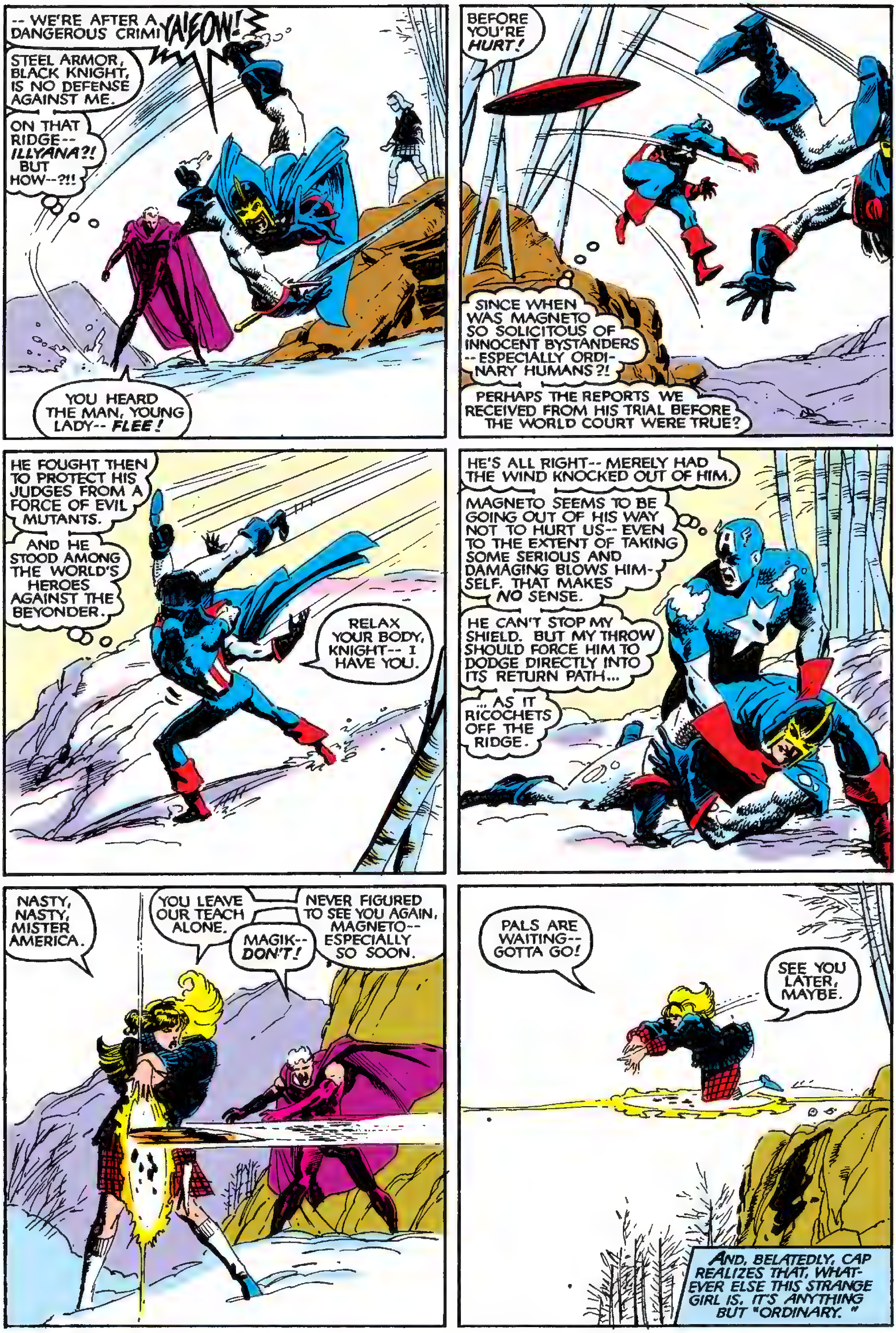

MEANWHILE, AT THE MASSACHUSETTS ACADEMY, STUDENTS HUSTLE AND BUSTLE INTO THE DINING COMMONS FOR BREAKFAST.
THIS IS A FAR MORE INTENSE AND DEMANDING ENVIRONMENT THAN WHAT THE NEW MUTANTS ARE USED TO--AT PROFESSOR XAVIER'S, THEY WERE THE ONLY STUDENTS; HERE, THEY'RE SEVEN OUT OF 1,000.

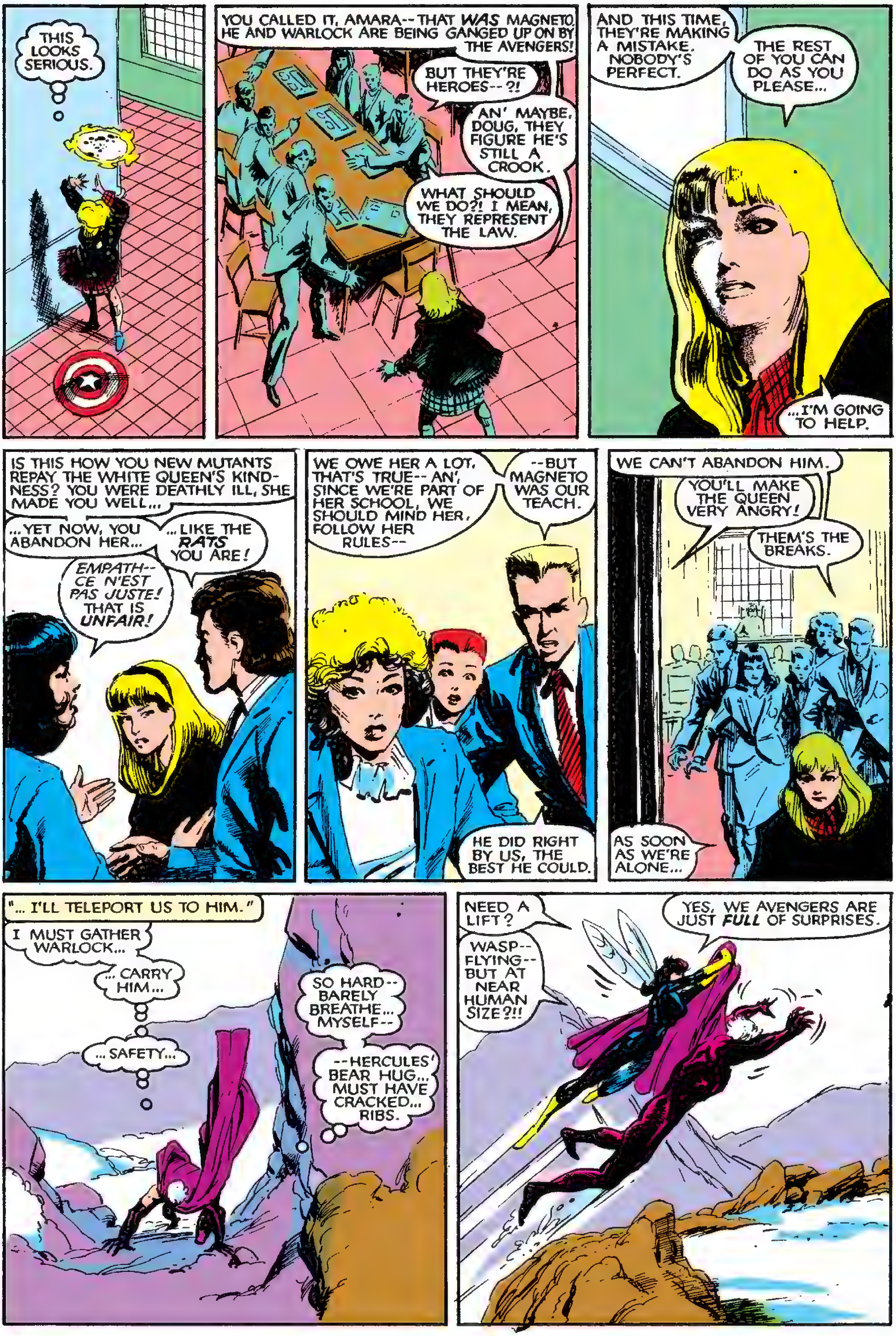

BUT FOR ALL THEIR INNATE SHYNESS, WHILE THEY MISS THE OLD SCHOOL, THEY NO LONGER FEEL SO OUT OF PLACE AT THE NEW.
...TEST?
...COPY YOUR HOMEWORK?
...YOU LOOK DEAD...
...MOVIE LATER, AMARA?
...PASS THE MILK...
...HISTORY PAPER DUE ON ROMAN SOCIETY-- AIGH!
... HE KISSED...
...SHE-- WHAT?!
BULL!

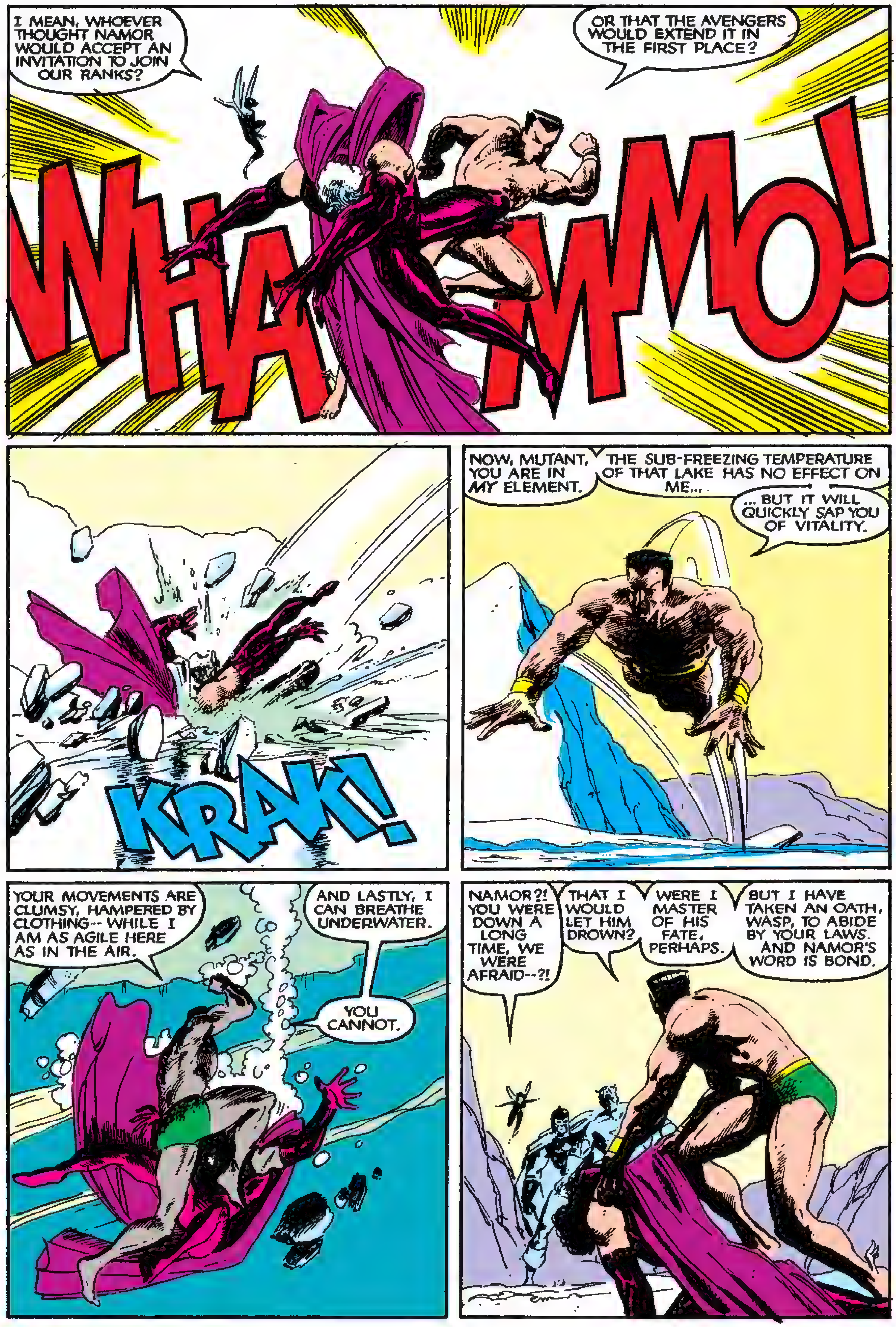

AMARA--?!
YOU OKAY, GIRL?
FINE, SAM. MY-- GOOD-NESS!
AS YOU KNOW, FRIENDS, MY... POWER GRANTS ME A CERTAIN... EMPATHY WITH OUR PLANET.

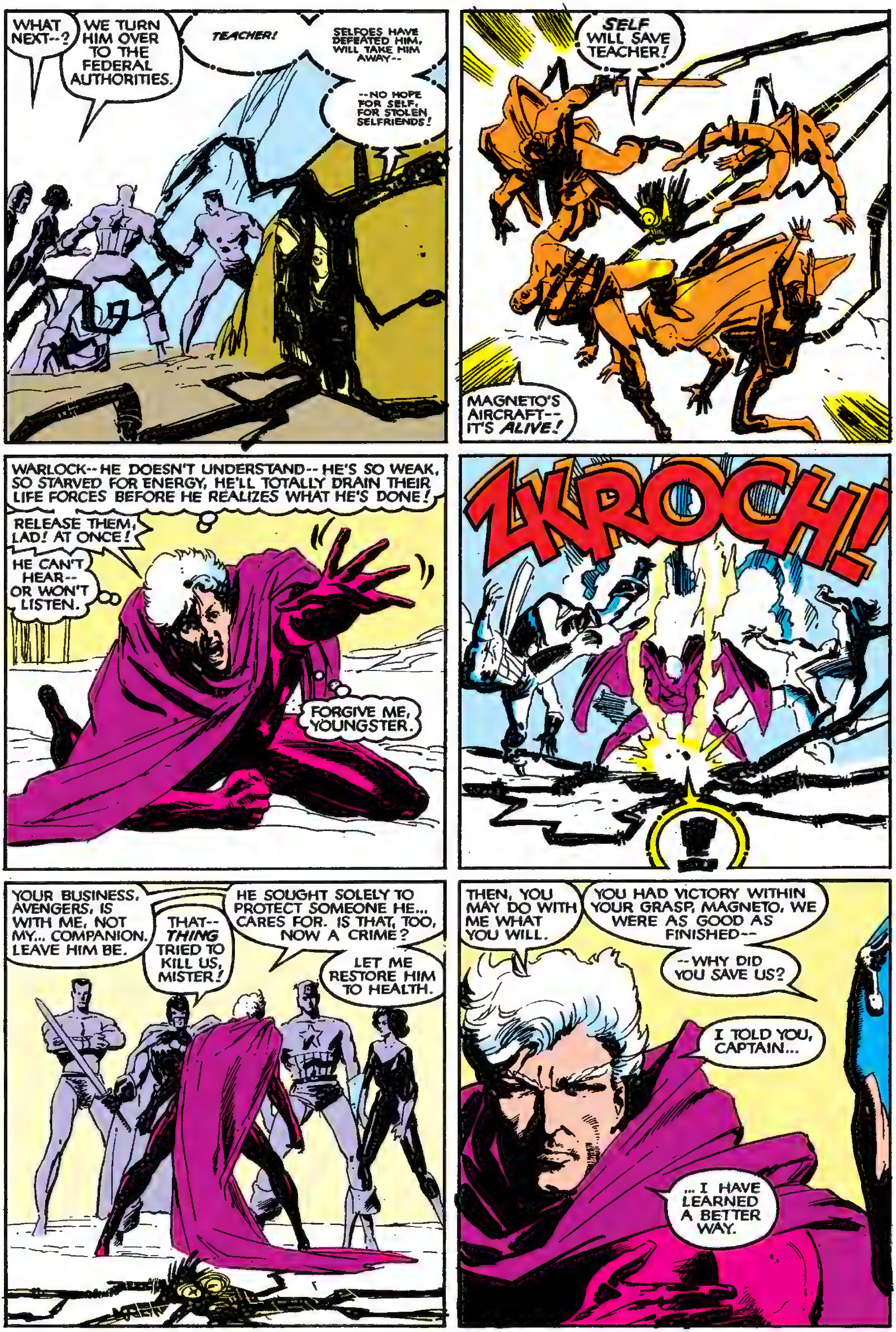

IN A SENSE, I FEEL WHAT HAPPENS TO IT IN MY IMMEDIATE VICINITY.
SOMEONE NEARBY JUST FORCIBLY MANIPULATED THE EARTH--AND THE ENERGY RESONANCES FEEL LIKE MAGNETO!
OUR OLD TEACH?! WHAT'S HE DOING HERE?!
PERHAPS, MAGIK, HE'S COME TO STEAL YOU AWAY? PERHAPS WE WILL ALL HAVE TO FIGHT HIM?!
Oh, NO! WE COULD NA' DO THAT!

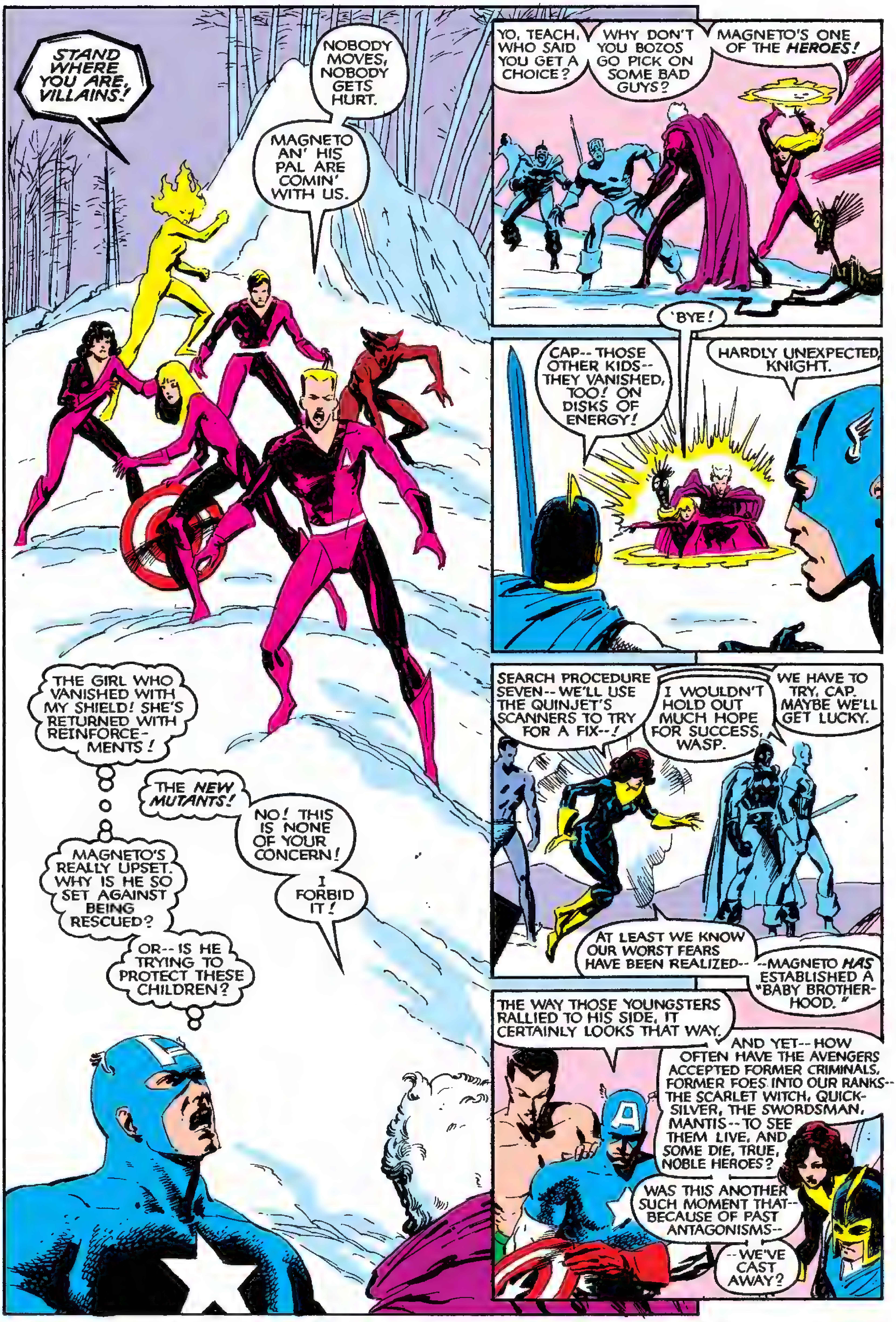

SHUT UP, EMPATH.
RAHNE-HON, DON'T LET THAT BIG-MOUTHED TOAD RATTLE YOU. HE DON'T KNOW WHAT HE'S TALKIN' ABOUT.
BUT, SAM, IF IT IS MAGNETO--!
AMARA, HE SENT US HERE!
FOR OUR OWN GOOD, REMEMBER?
MAYBE HE CHANGED HIS MIND.
THE WHITE QUEEN'LL JUST LOVE THAT, ILLYANA.
"SHOOT--Y'ALL THINK SHE'LL MAKE US TACKLE HIM?"
IF THERE WAS PROFIT IN IT.
"THINK SHE KNOWS?"
"THE HECK WITH HER--WHAT'LL WE DO?!"
THIS IS THE MOMENT I WAS MOST AFRAID OF.
HANG LOOSE, YOU GUYS. AMARA, POINT ME IN THE RIGHT DIRECTION, I'LL CHECK THINGS OUT.
YOU CRAZY, ILLYANA?!
BE COOL, BOSS, I'LL BE BACK IN A JIFF.
BE CAREFUL.
WHY?
SERVE YOU RIGHT TO GET CAUGHT.
BET YOU CAN'T WAIT, huh, EMPATH?
CREEP!
WITH THAT THOUGHT, ILLYANA NIKOLOVNA RASPUTIN TELEPORTS FROM DINING COMMONS TO LIMBO--
--THE OTHER DIMENSIONAL SORCEROUS REALM THAT IS HER DOMAIN-- AND FROM THERE...
...BACK TO EARTH.
WARLOCK?!?...
HE'S BEEN HURT!?!
HEY--YOU--MISTER!
WHAT'RE YOU DOING?!
WHERE'D SHE COME FROM?!
GET OUT OF HERE, KID!
I'M AN AVENGER--

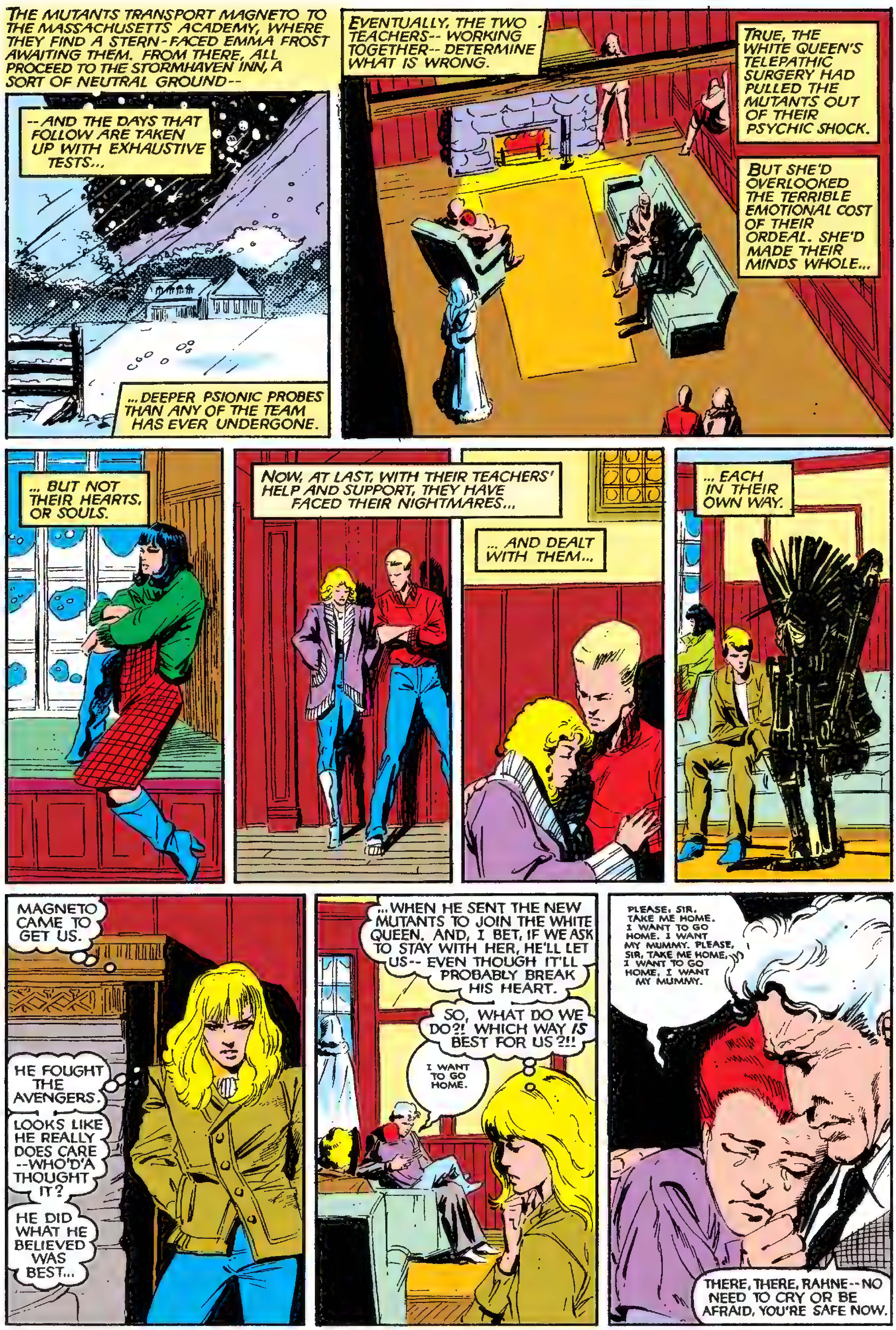

-- WE'RE AFTER A DANGEROUS CRIMI
YA!EOW!
STEEL ARMOR, BLACK KNIGHT, IS NO DEFENSE AGAINST ME.
ON THAT RIDGE-- *ILLYANA?!* BUT HOW--?!!
YOU HEARD THE MAN, YOUNG LADY-- *FLEE!*
BEFORE YOU'RE *HURT!*
SINCE WHEN WAS MAGNETO SO SOLICITOUS OF INNOCENT BYSTANDERS --ESPECIALLY ORDINARY HUMANS?!
PERHAPS THE REPORTS WE RECEIVED FROM HIS TRIAL BEFORE THE WORLD COURT WERE TRUE?
HE FOUGHT THEN TO PROTECT HIS JUDGES FROM A FORCE OF EVIL MUTANTS.
AND HE STOOD AMONG THE WORLD'S HEROES AGAINST THE BEYONDER.
RELAX YOUR BODY, KNIGHT-- I HAVE YOU.
HE'S ALL RIGHT-- MERELY HAD THE WIND KNOCKED OUT OF HIM.
MAGNETO SEEMS TO BE GOING OUT OF HIS WAY NOT TO HURT US-- EVEN TO THE EXTENT OF TAKING SOME SERIOUS AND DAMAGING BLOWS HIMSELF. THAT MAKES *NO* SENSE.
HE CAN'T STOP MY SHIELD. BUT MY THROW SHOULD FORCE HIM TO DODGE DIRECTLY INTO ITS RETURN PATH...
... AS IT RICOCHETS OFF THE RIDGE.
NASTY, NASTY, MISTER AMERICA.
YOU LEAVE OUR TEACH ALONE.
NEVER FIGURED TO SEE YOU AGAIN, MAGNETO-- ESPECIALLY SO SOON.
MAGIK-- *DON'T!*
PALS ARE WAITING-- GOTTA GO!
SEE YOU LATER, MAYBE.
AND, BELATEDLY, CAP REALIZES THAT, WHATEVER ELSE THIS STRANGE GIRL IS, IT'S ANYTHING BUT "ORDINARY."

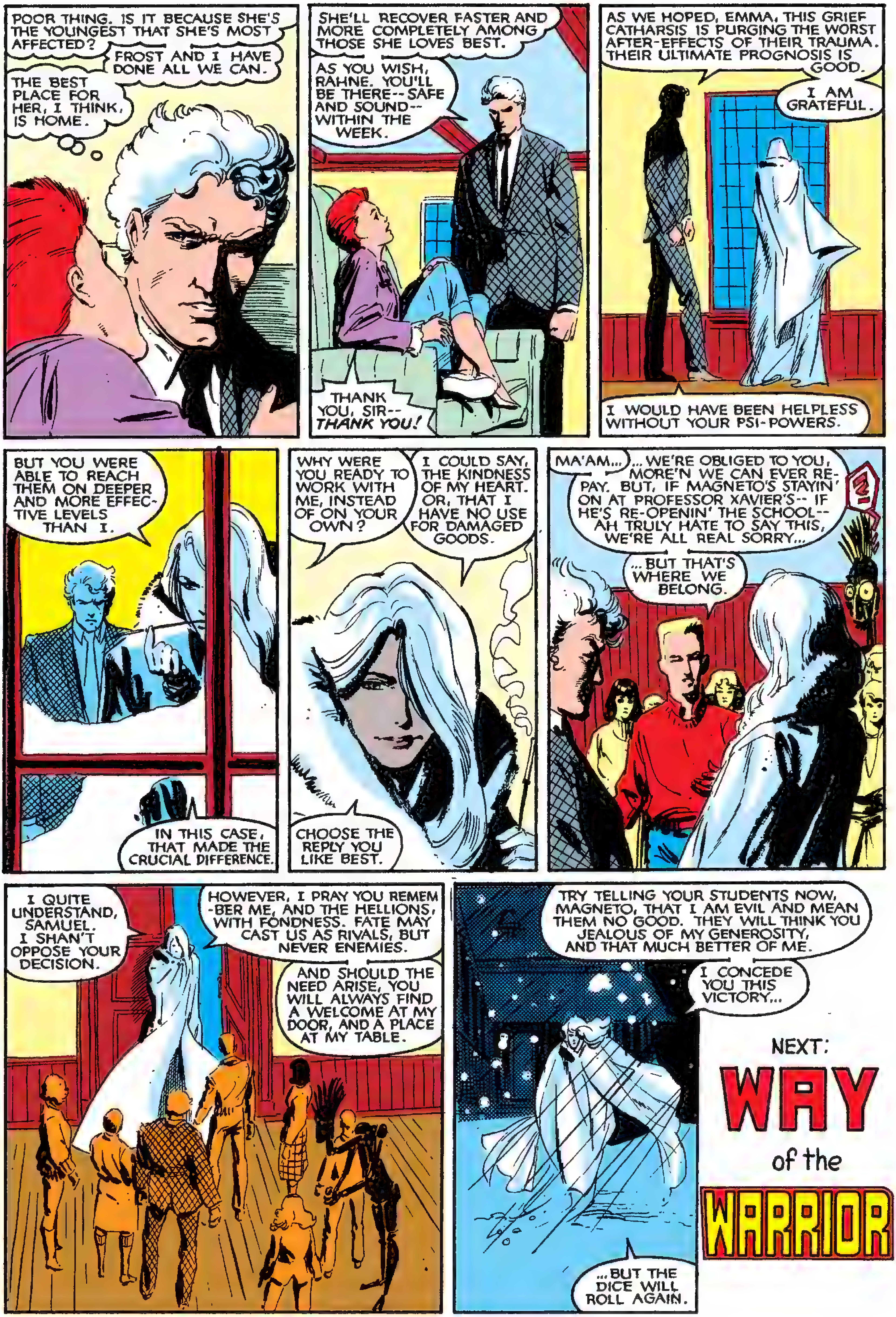

THIS LOOKS SERIOUS.
YOU CALLED IT, AMARA--THAT *WAS* MAGNETO. HE AND WARLOCK ARE BEING GANGED UP ON BY THE AVENGERS!
BUT THEY'RE HEROES--?!
AN' MAYBE, DOUG, THEY FIGURE HE'S STILL A CROOK.
WHAT SHOULD WE DO?! I MEAN, THEY REPRESENT THE LAW.
AND THIS TIME, THEY'RE MAKING A MISTAKE. NOBODY'S PERFECT.
THE REST OF YOU CAN DO AS YOU PLEASE...
...I'M GOING TO HELP.
IS THIS HOW YOU NEW MUTANTS REPAY THE WHITE QUEEN'S KINDNESS? YOU WERE DEATHLY ILL, SHE MADE YOU WELL...
...YET NOW, YOU ABANDON HER...
...LIKE THE *RATS* YOU ARE!
EMPATH--CE N'EST PAS JUSTE! THAT IS *UNFAIR!*
WE OWE HER A LOT, THAT'S TRUE--AN', SINCE WE'RE PART OF HER SCHOOL, WE SHOULD MIND HER, FOLLOW HER RULES--
--BUT MAGNETO WAS OUR TEACH.
HE DID RIGHT BY US, THE BEST HE COULD.
WE CAN'T ABANDON HIM.
YOU'LL MAKE THE QUEEN VERY ANGRY!
THEM'S THE BREAKS.
AS SOON AS WE'RE ALONE...
"... I'LL TELEPORT US TO HIM."
I MUST GATHER WARLOCK...
... CARRY HIM...
... SAFETY...
SO HARD--BARELY BREATHE... MYSELF--
--HERCULES' BEAR HUG... MUST HAVE CRACKED... RIBS.
NEED A LIFT?
WASP--FLYING--BUT AT NEAR HUMAN SIZE?!!
YES, WE AVENGERS ARE JUST *FULL* OF SURPRISES.

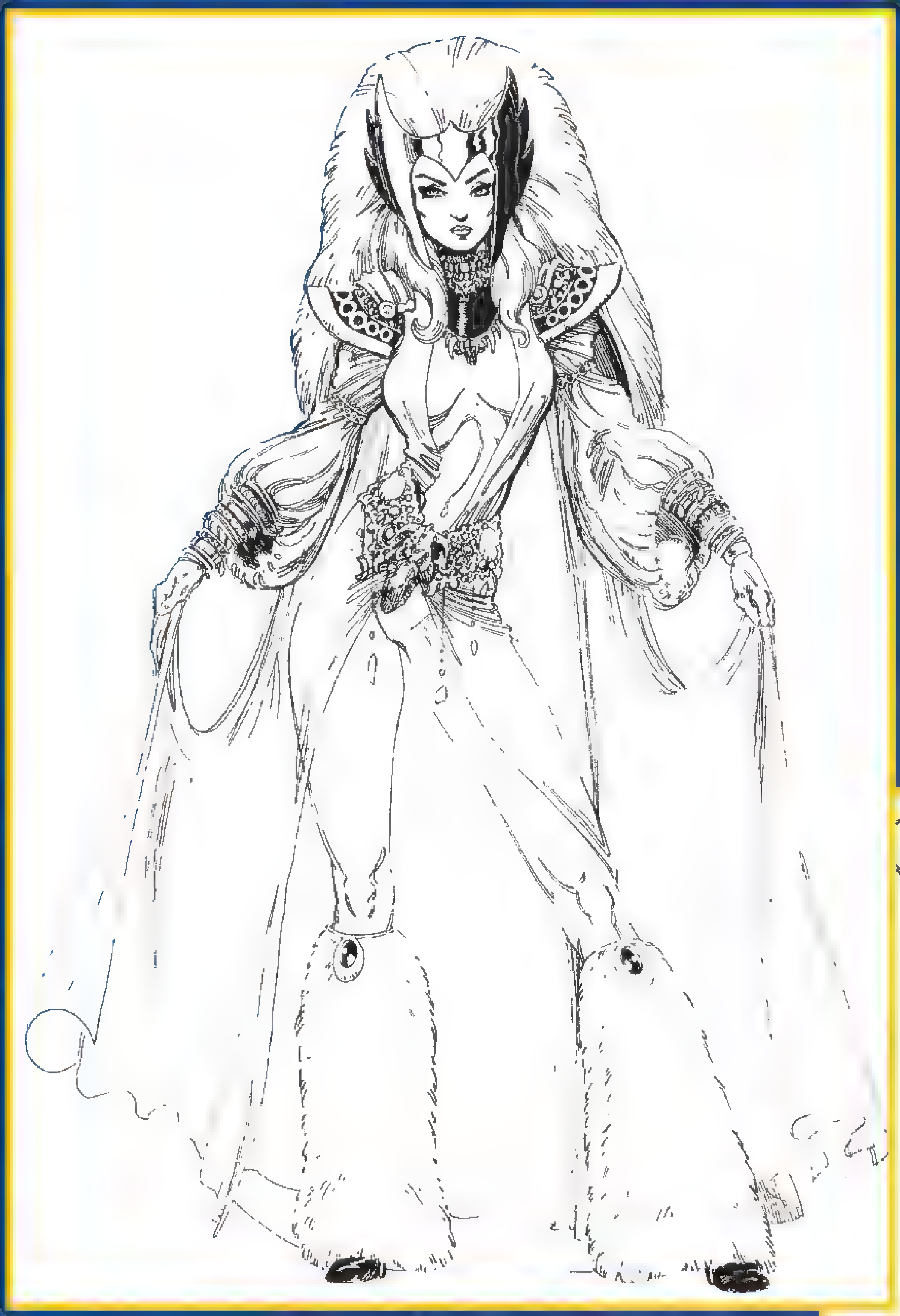

I MEAN, WHOEVER THOUGHT NAMOR WOULD ACCEPT AN INVITATION TO JOIN OUR RANKS?
OR THAT THE AVENGERS WOULD EXTEND IT IN THE FIRST PLACE?
WHAMMO!
KRAK!
NOW, MUTANT, YOU ARE IN *MY* ELEMENT.
THE SUB-FREEZING TEMPERATURE OF THAT LAKE HAS NO EFFECT ON ME...
...BUT IT WILL QUICKLY SAP YOU OF VITALITY.
YOUR MOVEMENTS ARE CLUMSY, HAMPERED BY CLOTHING-- WHILE I AM AS AGILE HERE AS IN THE AIR.
AND LASTLY, I CAN BREATHE UNDERWATER.
YOU CANNOT.
NAMOR?! YOU WERE DOWN A LONG TIME, WE WERE AFRAID--?!
THAT I WOULD LET HIM DROWN?
WERE I MASTER OF HIS FATE, PERHAPS.
BUT I HAVE TAKEN AN OATH, WASP, TO ABIDE BY YOUR LAWS. AND NAMOR'S WORD IS BOND.


WHAT NEXT--?
WE TURN HIM OVER TO THE FEDERAL AUTHORITIES.
TEACHER!
SELFOES HAVE DEFEATED HIM, WILL TAKE HIM AWAY--
--NO HOPE FOR SELF, FOR STOLEN SELFRIENDS!
SELF WILL SAVE TEACHER!
MAGNETO'S AIRCRAFT-- IT'S *ALIVE!*
WARLOCK--HE DOESN'T UNDERSTAND--HE'S SO WEAK, SO STARVED FOR ENERGY, HE'LL TOTALLY DRAIN THEIR LIFE FORCES BEFORE HE REALIZES WHAT HE'S DONE!
RELEASE THEM, LAD! AT ONCE!
HE CAN'T HEAR-- OR WON'T LISTEN.
FORGIVE ME, YOUNGSTER.
ZKROCH!
YOUR BUSINESS, AVENGERS, IS WITH ME, NOT MY... COMPANION. LEAVE HIM BE.
THAT-- *THING* TRIED TO KILL US, MISTER!
HE SOUGHT SOLELY TO PROTECT SOMEONE HE... CARES FOR. IS THAT, TOO, NOW A CRIME?
LET ME RESTORE HIM TO HEALTH.
THEN, YOU MAY DO WITH ME WHAT YOU WILL.
YOU HAD VICTORY WITHIN YOUR GRASP, MAGNETO. WE WERE AS GOOD AS FINISHED--
--WHY DID YOU SAVE US?
I TOLD YOU, CAPTAIN...
...I HAVE LEARNED A BETTER WAY.

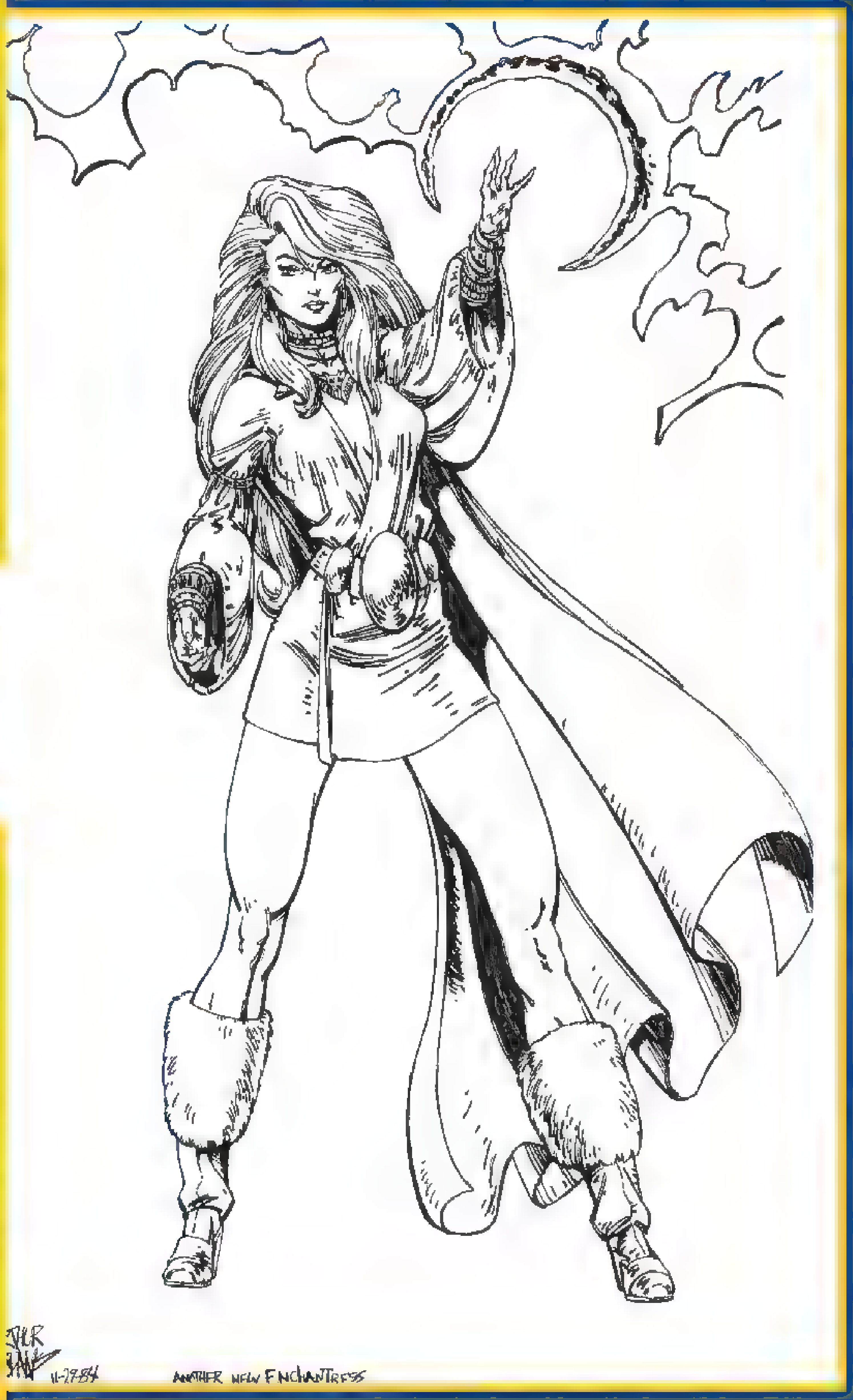

YO, TEACH, WHO SAID YOU GET A CHOICE?
WHY DON'T YOU BOZOS GO PICK ON SOME BAD GUYS?
MAGNETO'S ONE OF THE *HEROES!*
'BYE!
CAP-- THOSE OTHER KIDS-- THEY VANISHED, TOO! ON DISKS OF ENERGY!
HARDLY UNEXPECTED, KNIGHT.
SEARCH PROCEDURE SEVEN-- WE'LL USE THE QUINJET'S SCANNERS TO TRY FOR A FIX--!
I WOULDN'T HOLD OUT MUCH HOPE FOR SUCCESS, WASP.
WE HAVE TO TRY, CAP. MAYBE WE'LL GET LUCKY.
AT LEAST WE KNOW OUR WORST FEARS HAVE BEEN REALIZED--
--MAGNETO *HAS* ESTABLISHED A "BABY BROTHERHOOD."
THE WAY THOSE YOUNGSTERS RALLIED TO HIS SIDE, IT CERTAINLY LOOKS THAT WAY.
AND YET-- HOW OFTEN HAVE THE AVENGERS ACCEPTED FORMER CRIMINALS, FORMER FOES INTO OUR RANKS-- THE SCARLET WITCH, QUICKSILVER, THE SWORDSMAN, MANTIS-- TO SEE THEM LIVE, AND SOME DIE, TRUE, NOBLE HEROES?
WAS THIS ANOTHER SUCH MOMENT THAT-- BECAUSE OF PAST ANTAGONISMS--
--WE'VE CAST AWAY?
STAND WHERE YOU ARE, VILLAINS!
NOBODY MOVES, NOBODY GETS HURT.
MAGNETO AN' HIS PAL ARE COMIN' WITH US.
THE GIRL WHO VANISHED WITH MY SHIELD! SHE'S RETURNED WITH REINFORCEMENTS!
THE *NEW MUTANTS!*
MAGNETO'S REALLY UPSET. WHY IS HE SO SET AGAINST BEING RESCUED?
OR-- IS HE TRYING TO PROTECT THESE CHILDREN?
NO! THIS IS NONE OF YOUR CONCERN!
I FORBID IT!

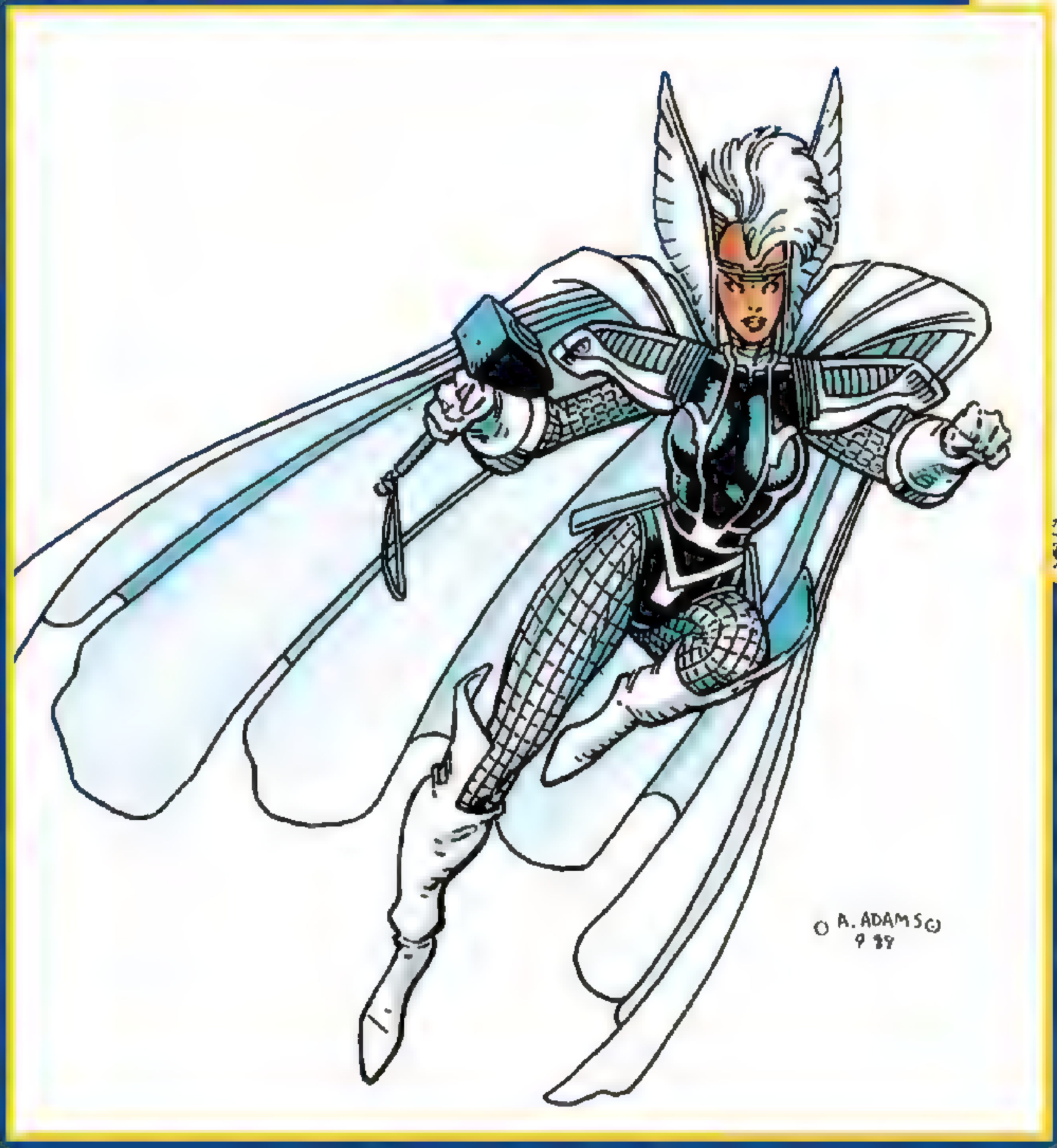

THE MUTANTS TRANSPORT MAGNETO TO THE MASSACHUSETTS ACADEMY, WHERE THEY FIND A STERN-FACED EMMA FROST AWAITING THEM. FROM THERE, ALL PROCEED TO THE STORMHAVEN INN, A SORT OF NEUTRAL GROUND--
--AND THE DAYS THAT FOLLOW ARE TAKEN UP WITH EXHAUSTIVE TESTS...
...DEEPER PSIONIC PROBES THAN ANY OF THE TEAM HAS EVER UNDERGONE.
EVENTUALLY, THE TWO TEACHERS-- WORKING TOGETHER-- DETERMINE WHAT IS WRONG.
TRUE, THE WHITE QUEEN'S TELEPATHIC SURGERY HAD PULLED THE MUTANTS OUT OF THEIR PSYCHIC SHOCK.
BUT SHE'D OVERLOOKED THE TERRIBLE EMOTIONAL COST OF THEIR ORDEAL. SHE'D MADE THEIR MINDS WHOLE...
... BUT NOT THEIR HEARTS, OR SOULS.
NOW, AT LAST, WITH THEIR TEACHERS' HELP AND SUPPORT, THEY HAVE FACED THEIR NIGHTMARES...
... AND DEALT WITH THEM...
... EACH IN THEIR OWN WAY.
MAGNETO CAME TO GET US.
HE FOUGHT THE AVENGERS.
LOOKS LIKE HE REALLY DOES CARE --WHO'D'A THOUGHT IT?
HE DID WHAT HE BELIEVED WAS BEST...
...WHEN HE SENT THE NEW MUTANTS TO JOIN THE WHITE QUEEN. AND, I BET, IF WE ASK TO STAY WITH HER, HE'LL LET US-- EVEN THOUGH IT'LL PROBABLY BREAK HIS HEART.
SO, WHAT DO WE DO?! WHICH WAY IS BEST FOR US?!!
I WANT TO GO HOME.
PLEASE, SIR, TAKE ME HOME. I WANT TO GO HOME. I WANT MY MUMMY. PLEASE, SIR, TAKE ME HOME, I WANT TO GO HOME, I WANT MY MUMMY.
THERE, THERE, RAHNE--NO NEED TO CRY OR BE AFRAID, YOU'RE SAFE NOW.


POOR THING. IS IT BECAUSE SHE'S THE YOUNGEST THAT SHE'S MOST AFFECTED?
FROST AND I HAVE DONE ALL WE CAN.
THE BEST PLACE FOR HER, I THINK, IS HOME.
SHE'LL RECOVER FASTER AND MORE COMPLETELY AMONG THOSE SHE LOVES BEST.
AS YOU WISH, RAHNE. YOU'LL BE THERE-- SAFE AND SOUND-- WITHIN THE WEEK.
THANK YOU, SIR-- *THANK YOU!*
AS WE HOPED, EMMA, THIS GRIEF CATHARSIS IS PURGING THE WORST AFTER-EFFECTS OF THEIR TRAUMA. THEIR ULTIMATE PROGNOSIS IS GOOD.
I AM GRATEFUL.
I WOULD HAVE BEEN HELPLESS WITHOUT YOUR PSI-POWERS.
BUT YOU WERE ABLE TO REACH THEM ON DEEPER AND MORE EFFECTIVE LEVELS THAN I.
IN THIS CASE, THAT MADE THE CRUCIAL DIFFERENCE.
WHY WERE YOU READY TO WORK WITH ME, INSTEAD OF ON YOUR OWN?
I COULD SAY, THE KINDNESS OF MY HEART. OR, THAT I HAVE NO USE FOR DAMAGED GOODS.
CHOOSE THE REPLY YOU LIKE BEST.
MA'AM...
...WE'RE OBLIGED TO YOU, MORE'N WE CAN EVER REPAY. BUT, IF MAGNETO'S STAYIN' ON AT PROFESSOR XAVIER'S-- IF HE'S RE-OPENIN' THE SCHOOL-- AH TRULY HATE TO SAY THIS, WE'RE ALL REAL SORRY...
...BUT THAT'S WHERE WE BELONG.
I QUITE UNDERSTAND, SAMUEL. I SHAN'T OPPOSE YOUR DECISION.
HOWEVER, I PRAY YOU REMEMBER ME, AND THE HELLIONS, WITH FONDNESS. FATE MAY CAST US AS RIVALS, BUT NEVER ENEMIES.
AND SHOULD THE NEED ARISE, YOU WILL ALWAYS FIND A WELCOME AT MY DOOR, AND A PLACE AT MY TABLE.
TRY TELLING YOUR STUDENTS NOW, MAGNETO, THAT I AM EVIL AND MEAN THEM NO GOOD. THEY WILL THINK YOU JEALOUS OF MY GENEROSITY, AND THAT MUCH BETTER OF ME.
I CONCEDE YOU THIS VICTORY...
...BUT THE DICE WILL ROLL AGAIN.
NEXT:
WAY of the WARRIOR



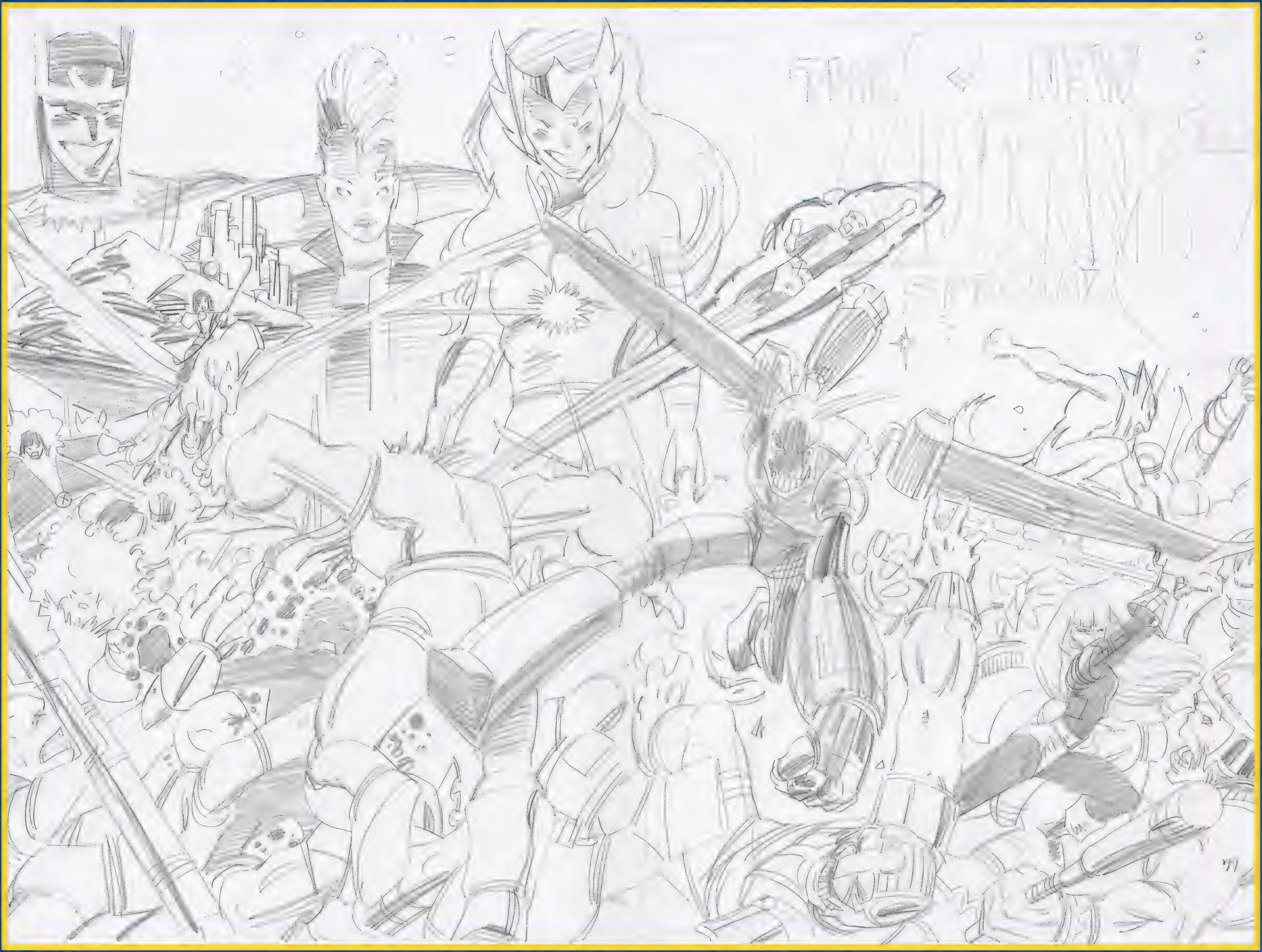
Enchantress designs
by Arthur Adams

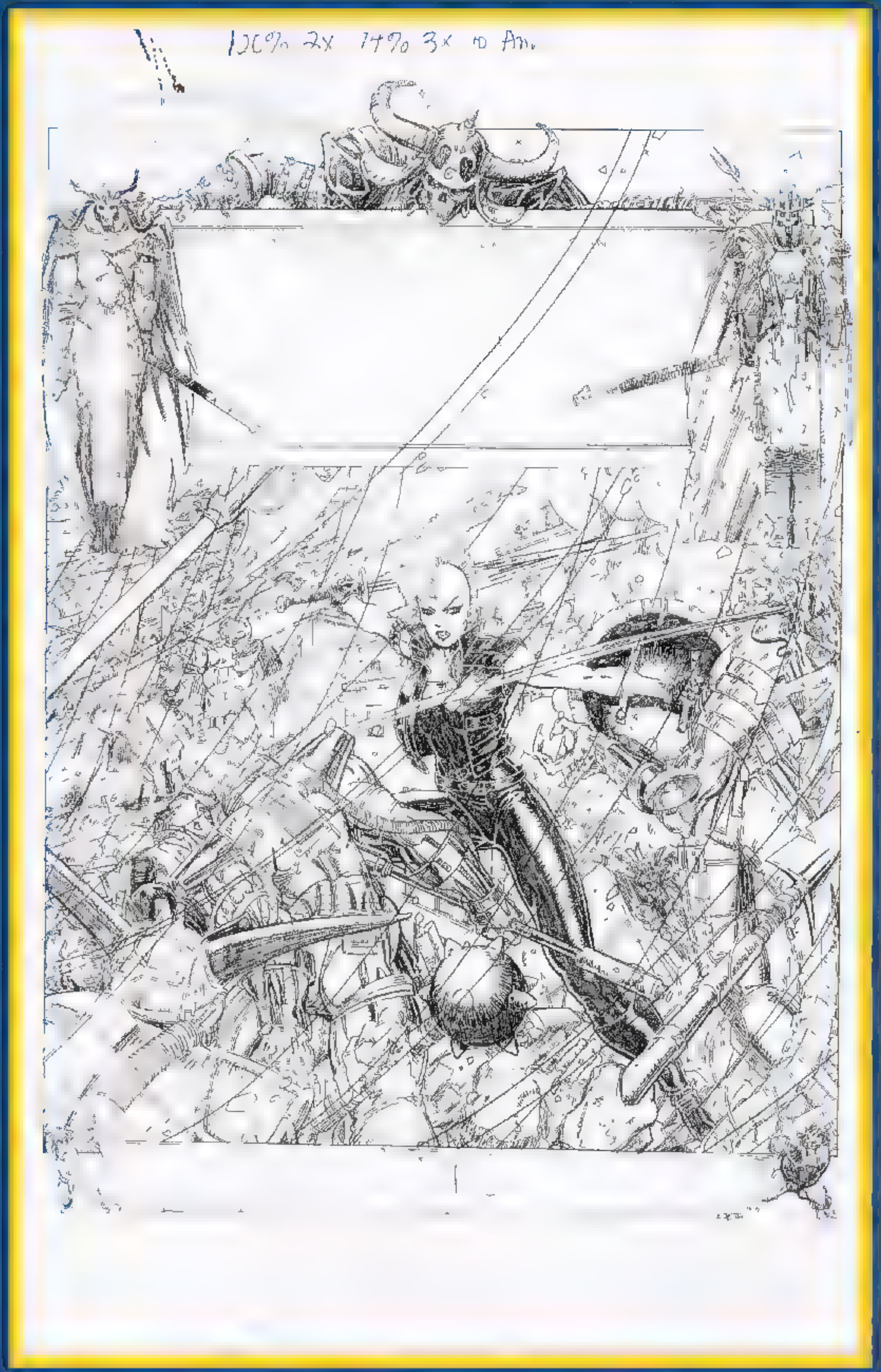

11-27-84
ANOTHER NEW ENCHANTRESS

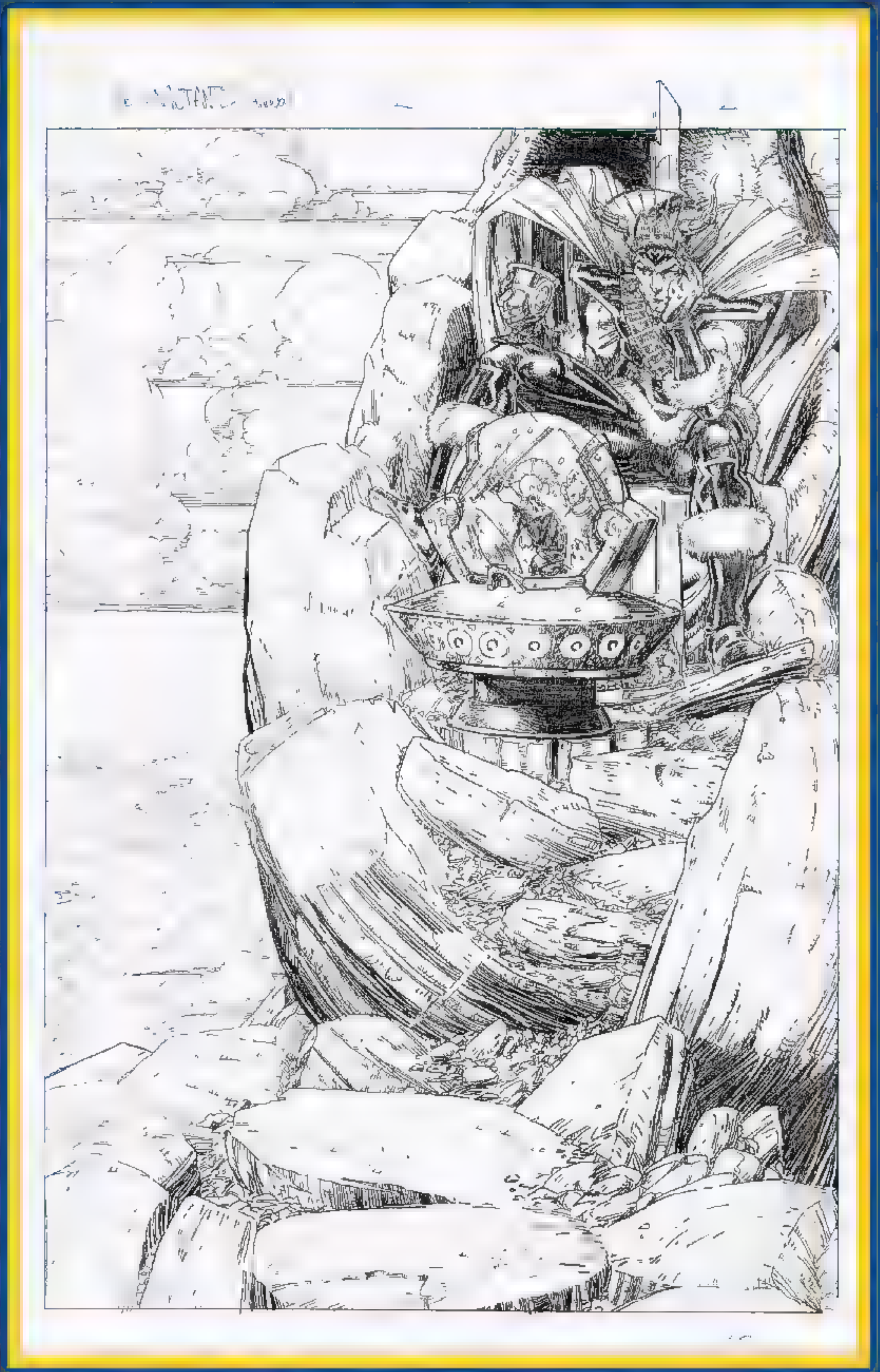


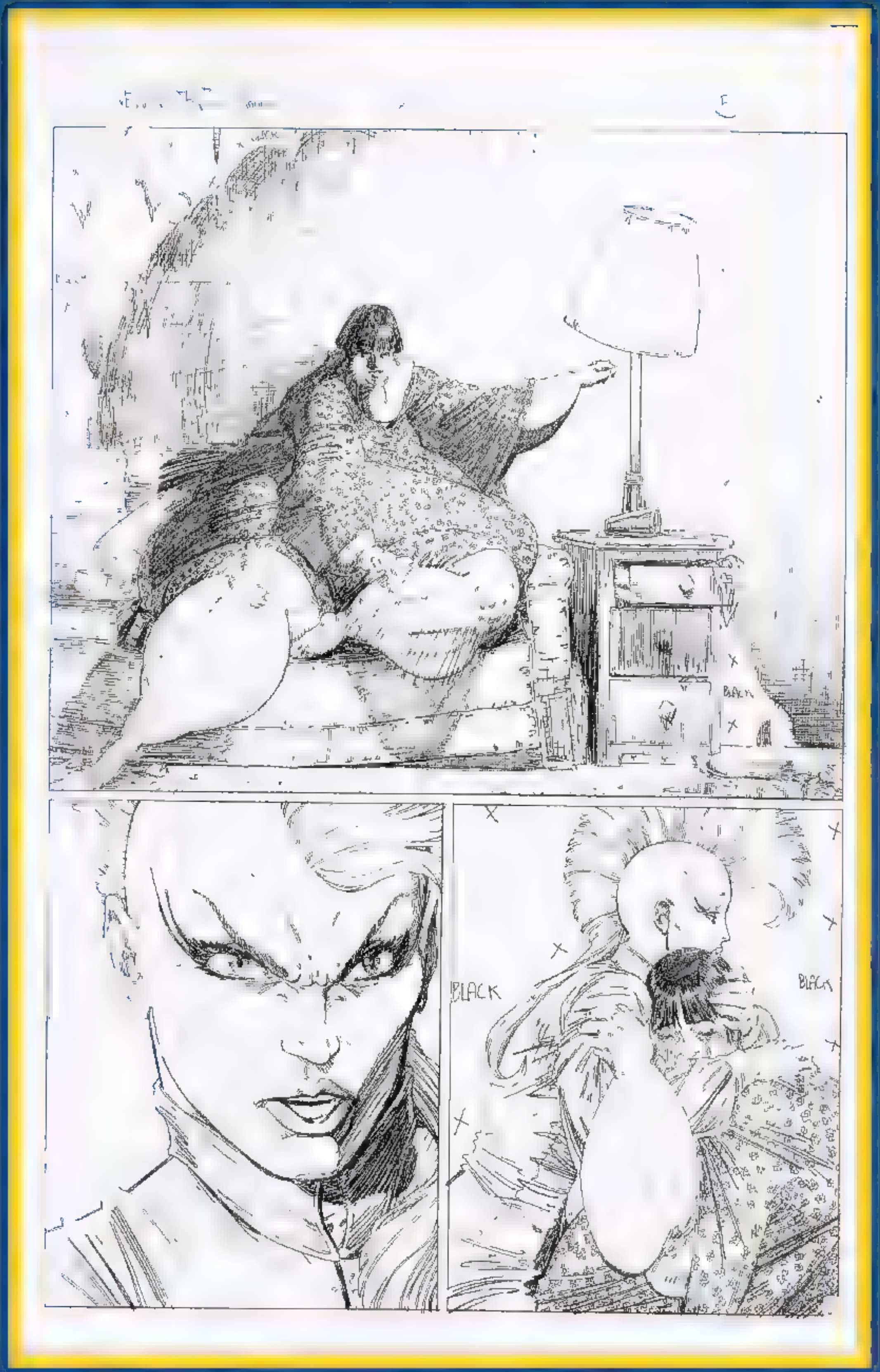
Back cover art for *X-Men:
The Asgardian Wars TPB
(1988)* by Arthur Adams

New Mutants Special Edition #1 cover sketch and interior pencils by Arthur Adams





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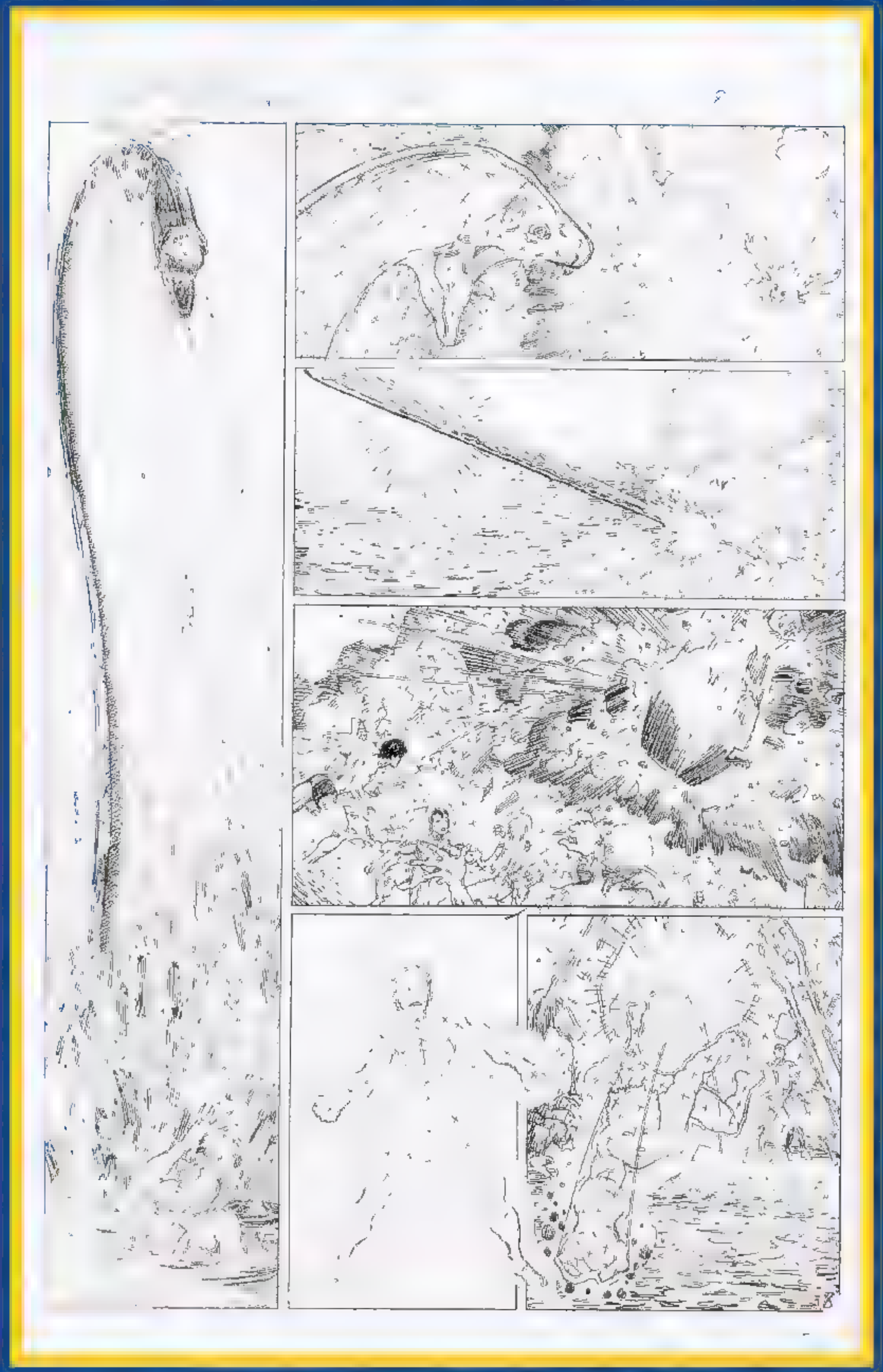
BLACK

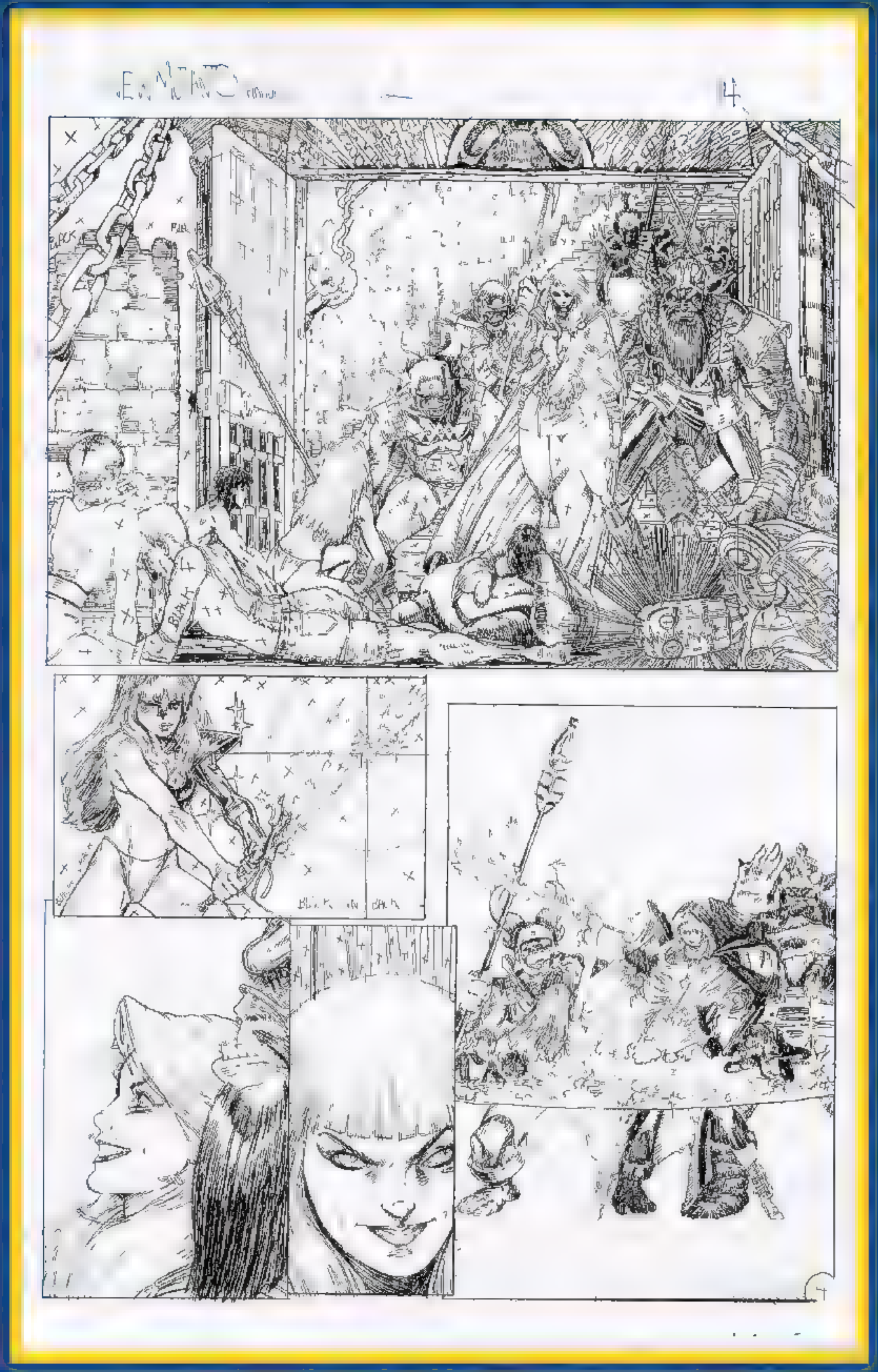
COLOR ILLYANA BIKINI WHITE

COLOR DANI'S SWIMSUIT "HOT PINK"



AVALANCHE ST HAPPENING

NEW MUTANTS Annual 2 13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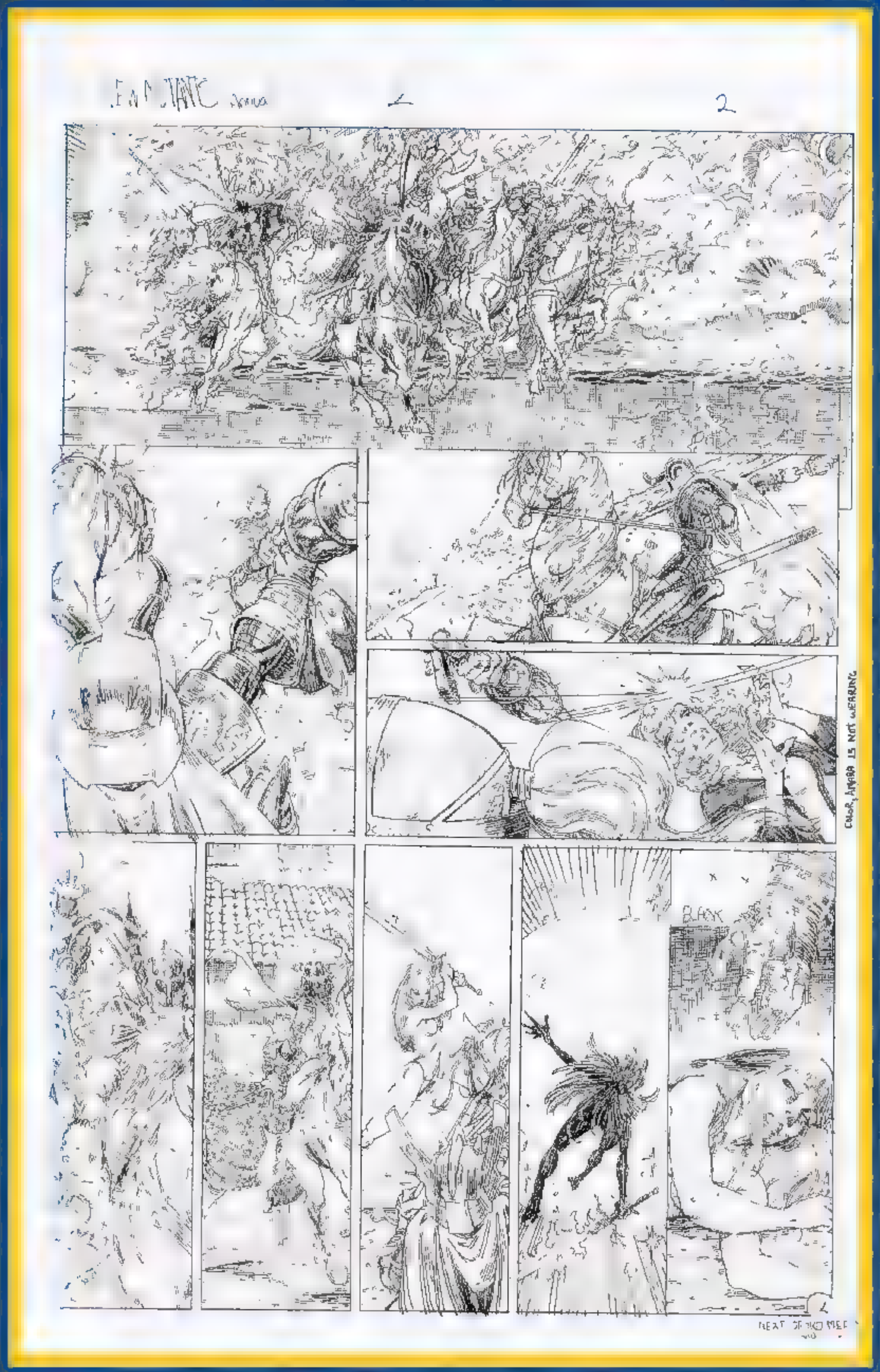

NEW MUTANTS Annual 2 2

NEW MUTANTS Annual 2 15

NEW MUTANTS Annual 6

17
ERK

18
PUSH PUSH PUSH PUSH
PUSH PUSH
PHUV!
BLACK
CLICK

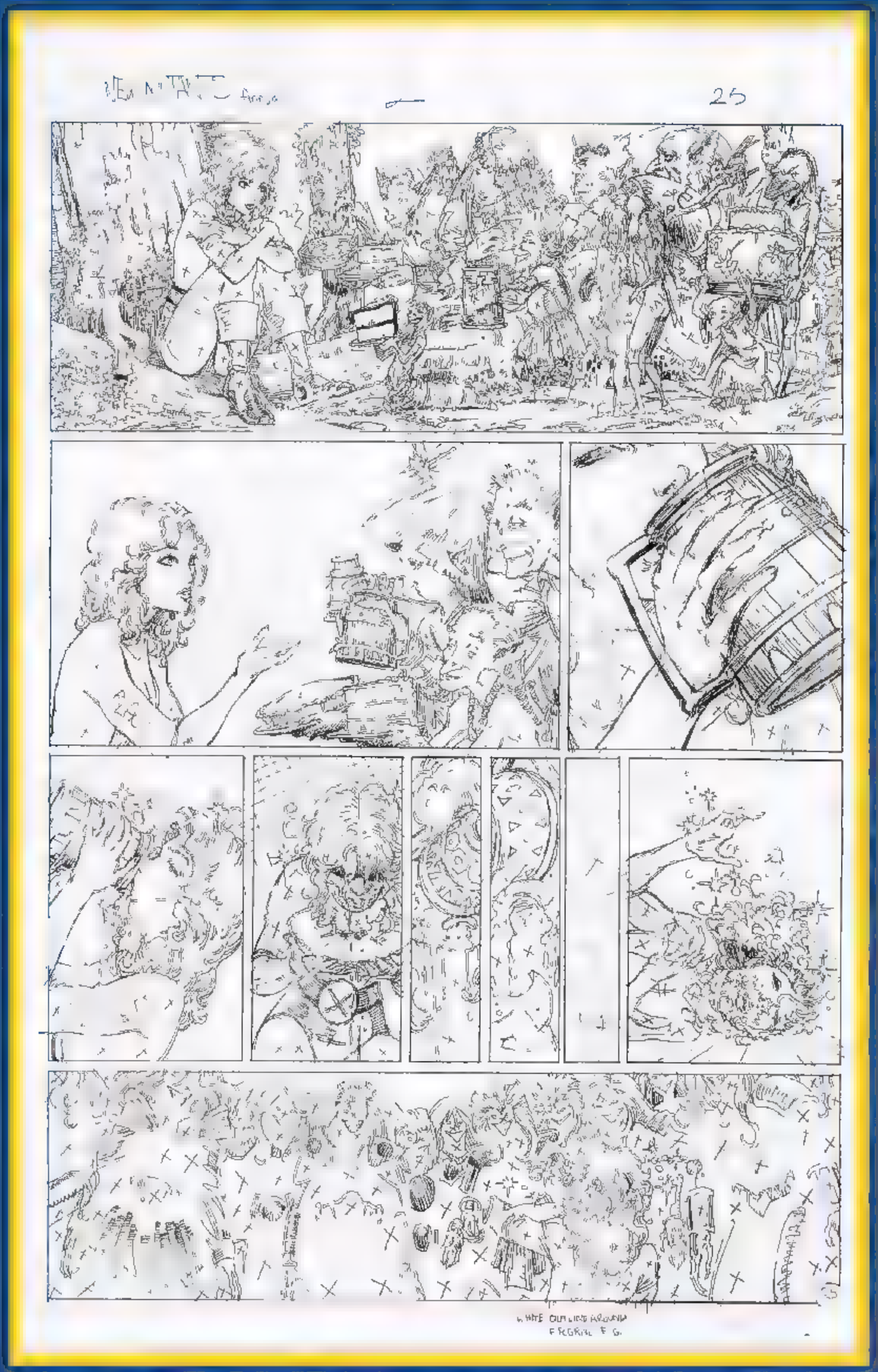
19
OH MY!
HEY YOU GUYS! LOOK! I HAVE FOUND A REINDEER! IT CERTAINLY IS A DECENT REINDEER, I MUST SAY!
HEY, WAIT A MINNIT! I AM FALLIN'!
BOOM!
HEY, THE FOREST LOOKS FUNNY CLOSE UP!
GIANT GETS STUCK AND IS TO STUPID TO FIGURE OUT HOW TO GET UP

20
AAEEEGH!
OW...!
PARDON ME BUT YOU SEEM TO BE STEPPIN' ON MY FOOT
KLP!
AAEEEIGH!! MY JUICE IS FALLIN' OUT!!
AAEEGH!!
KABOOM! BOOM BOOM

21

23
WHACK
BAM!

WAHBOOM!
BAM!
POW!
SOCK!
WHAMO!
CRASH!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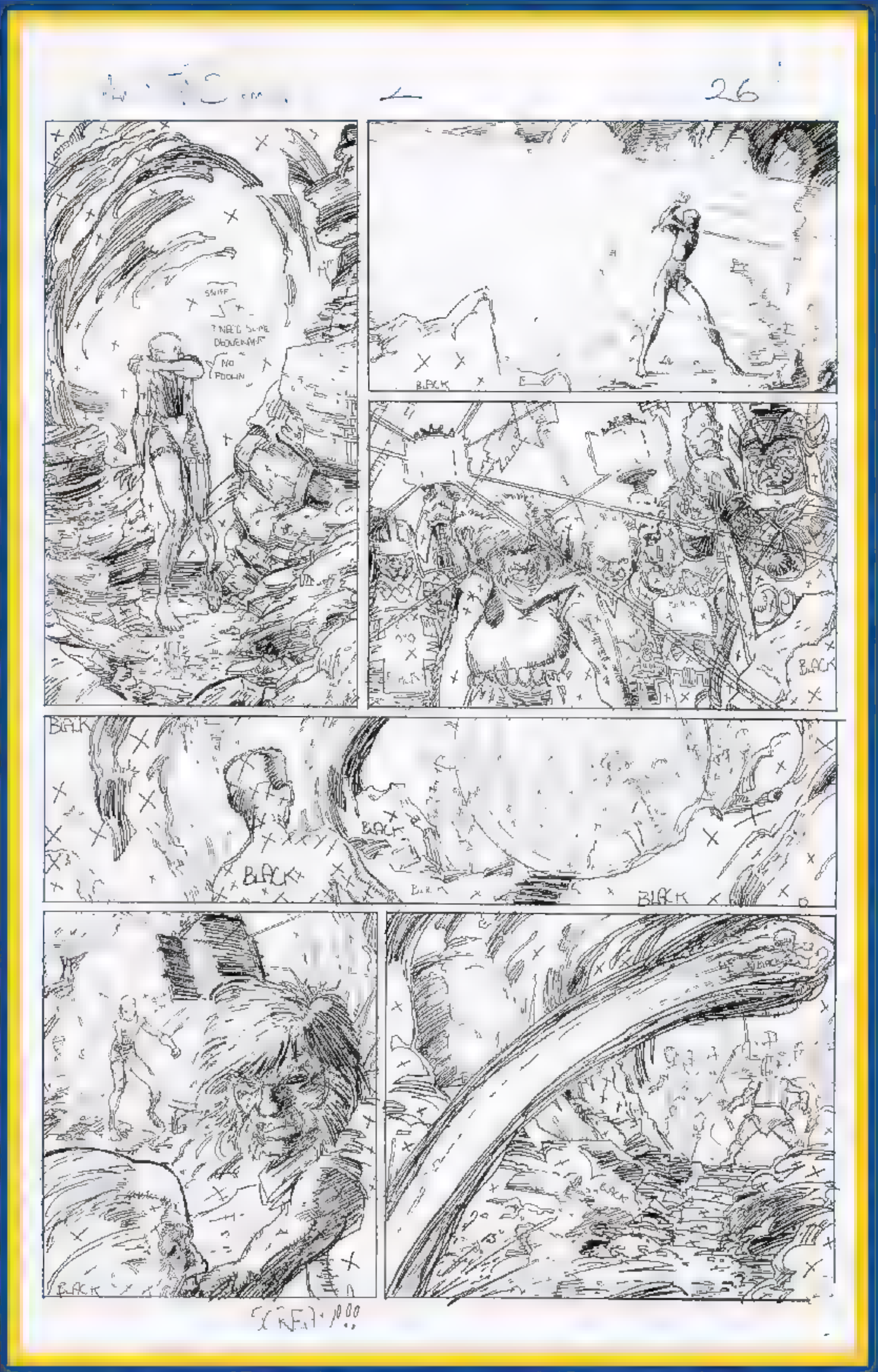
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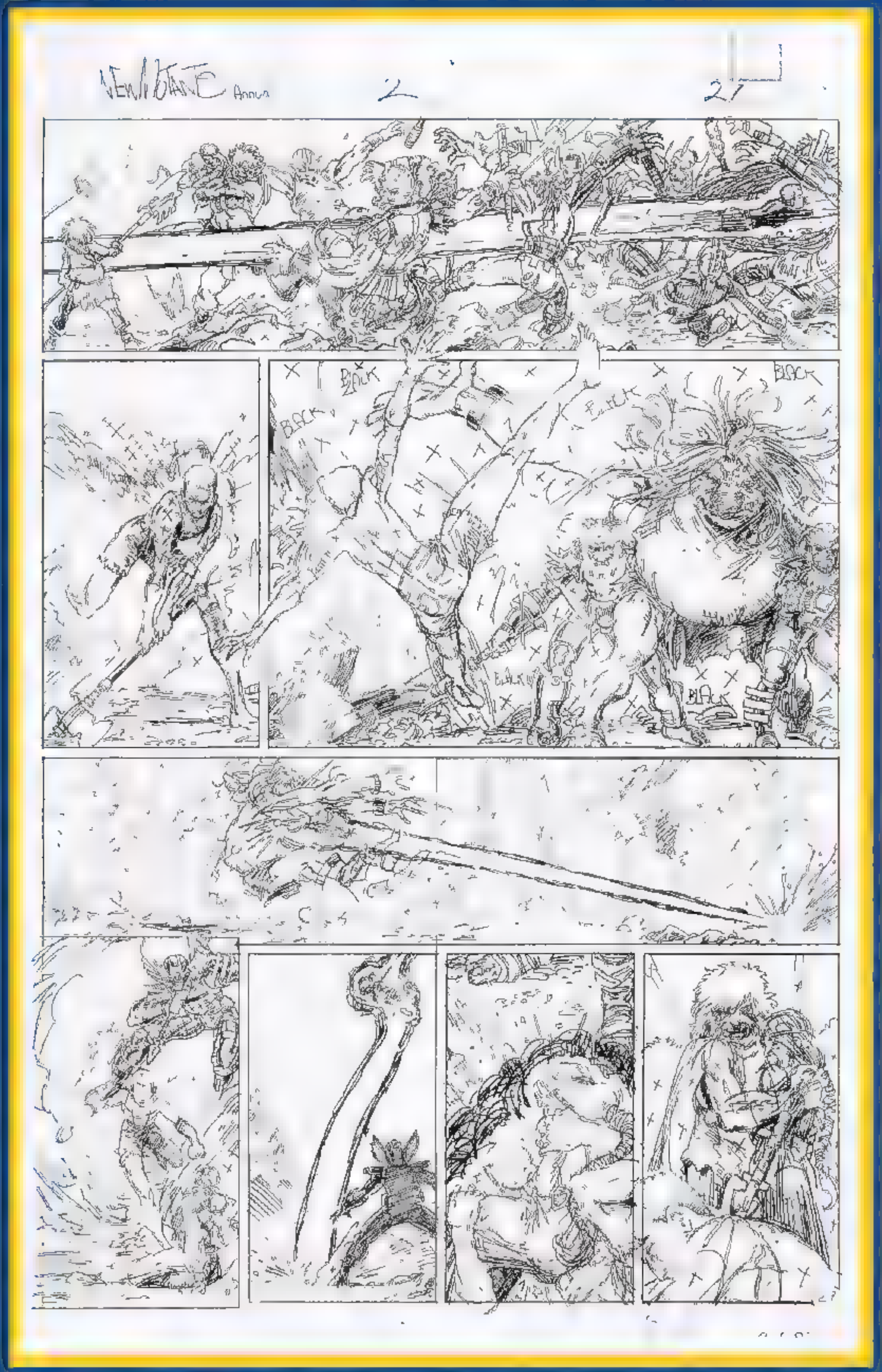
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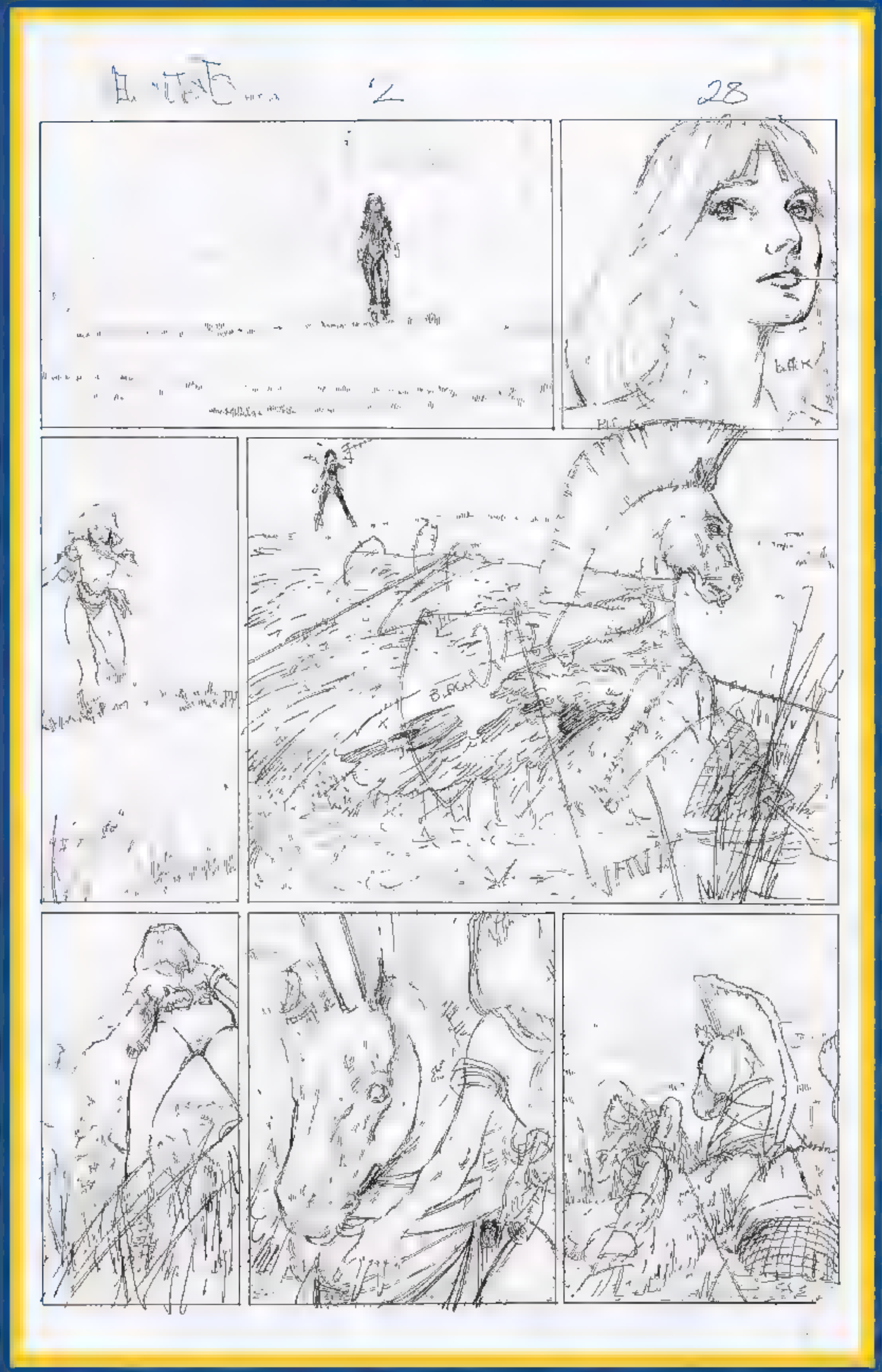
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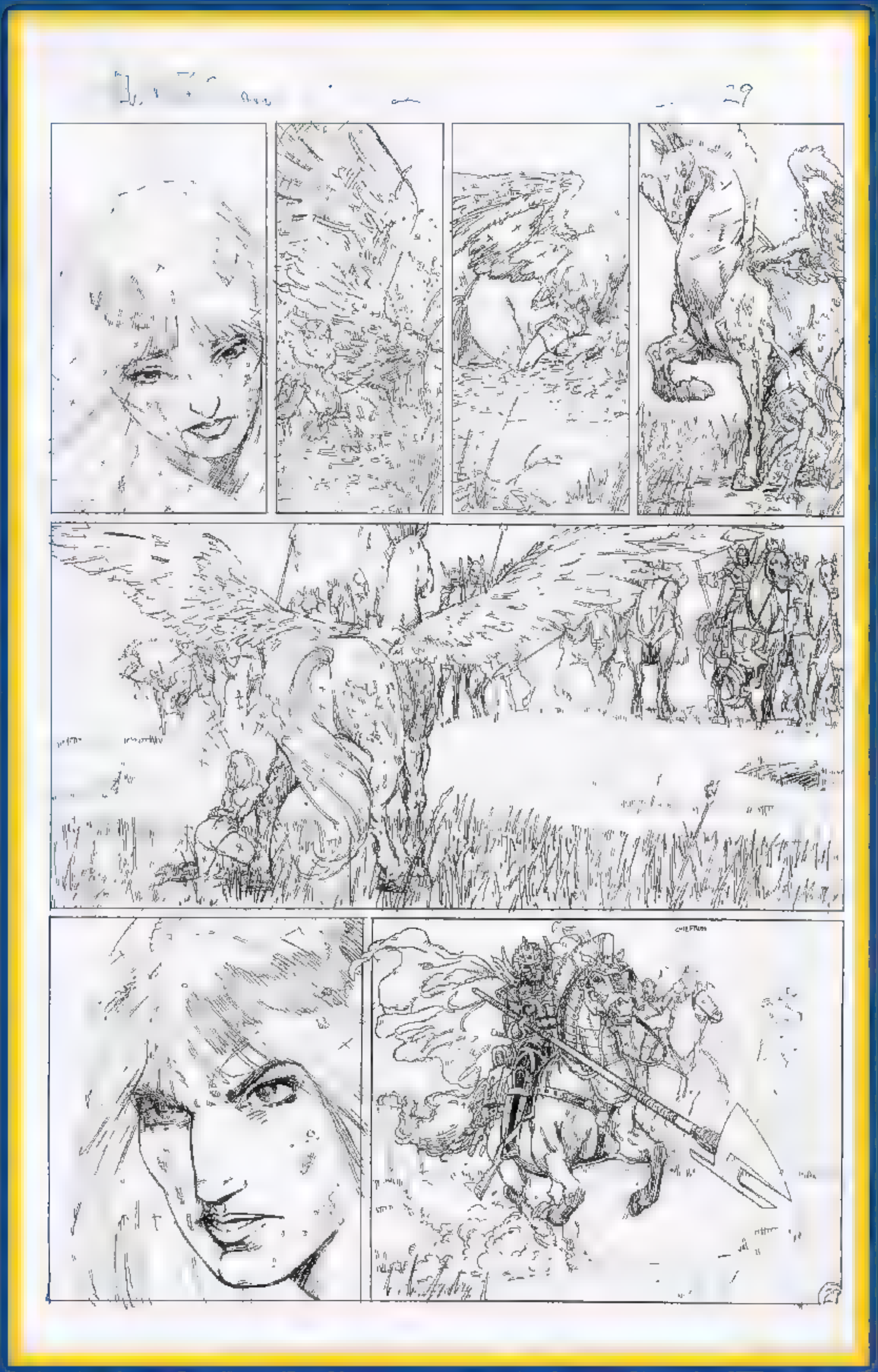
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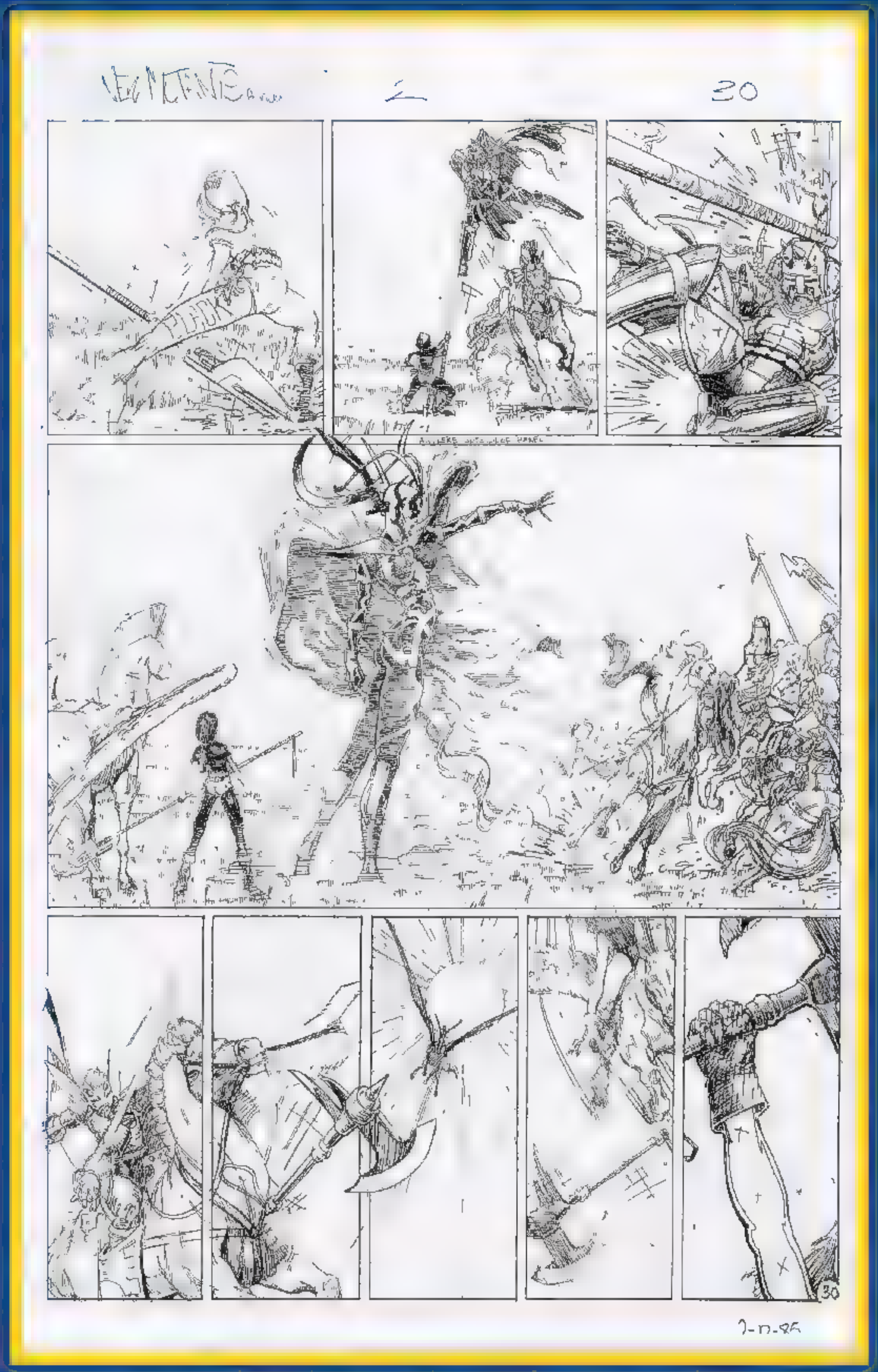
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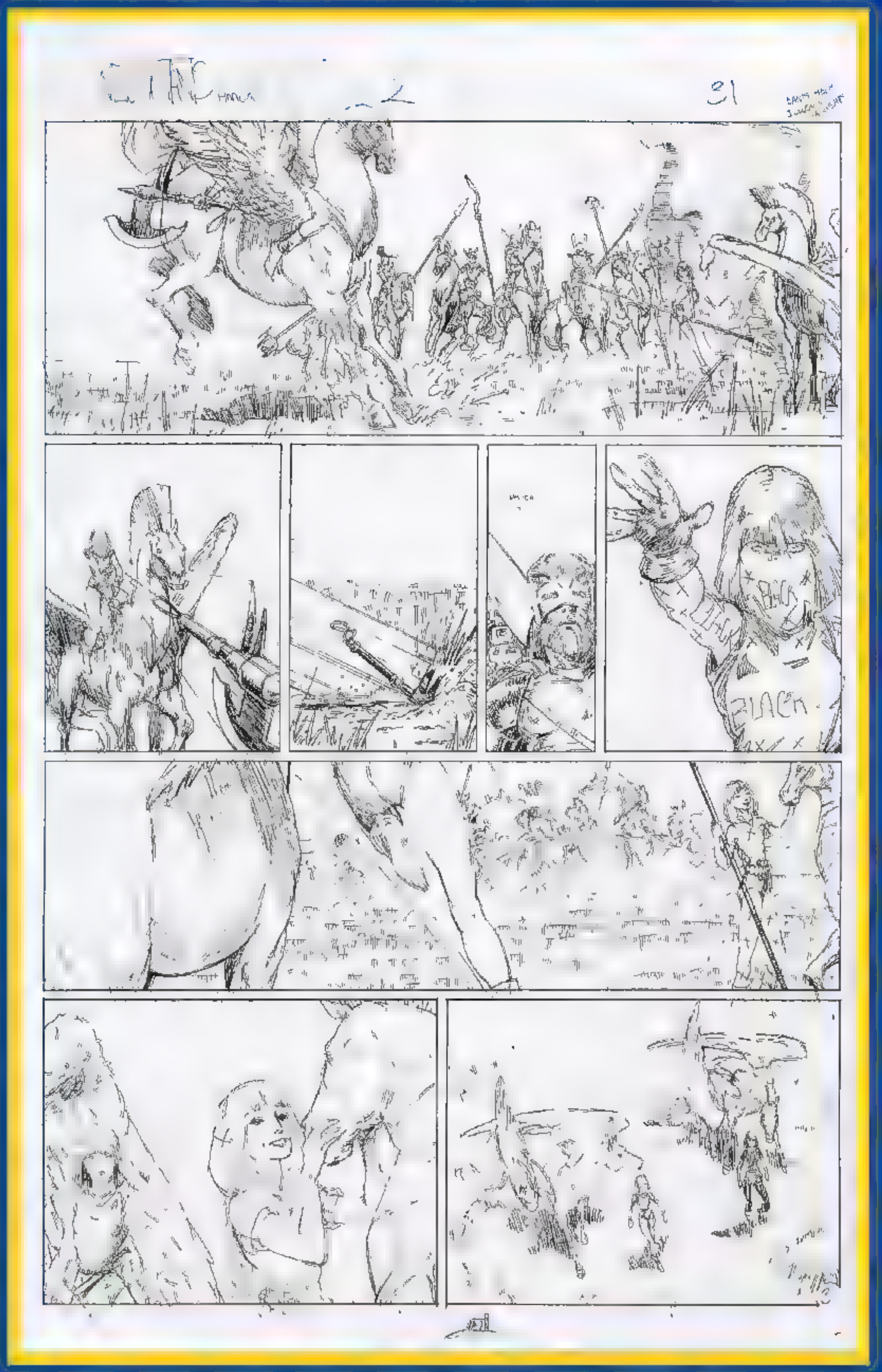
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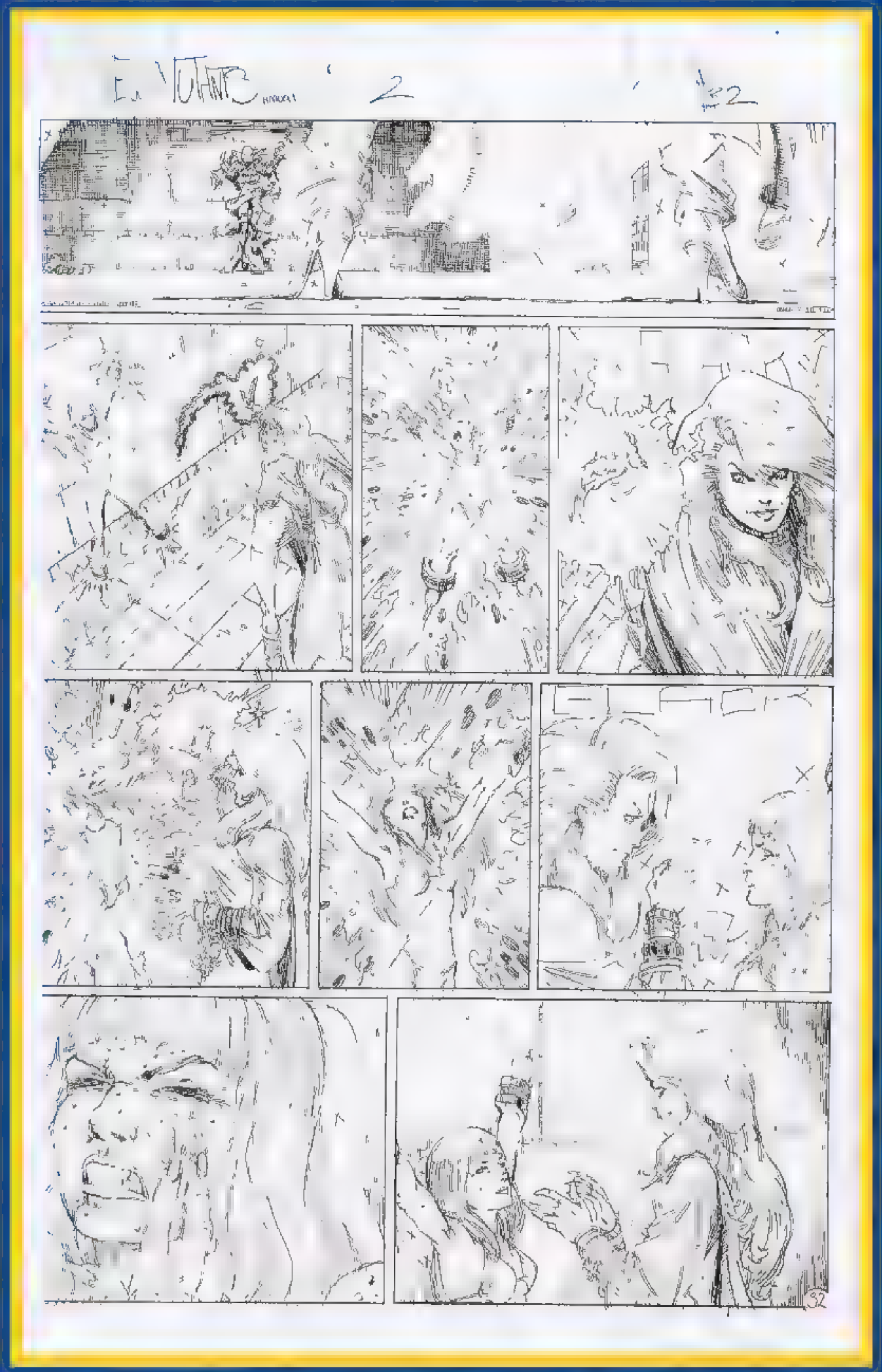
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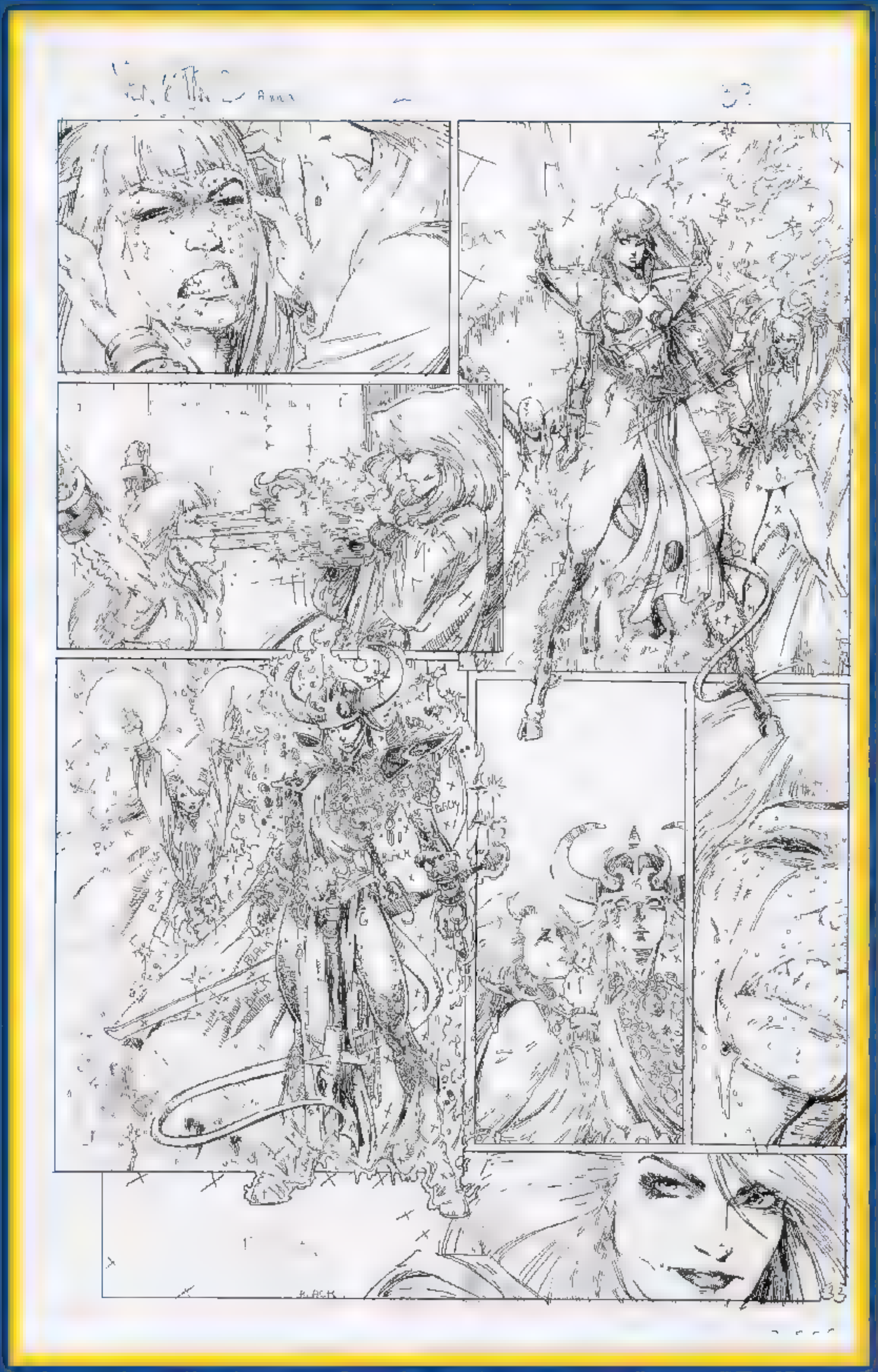
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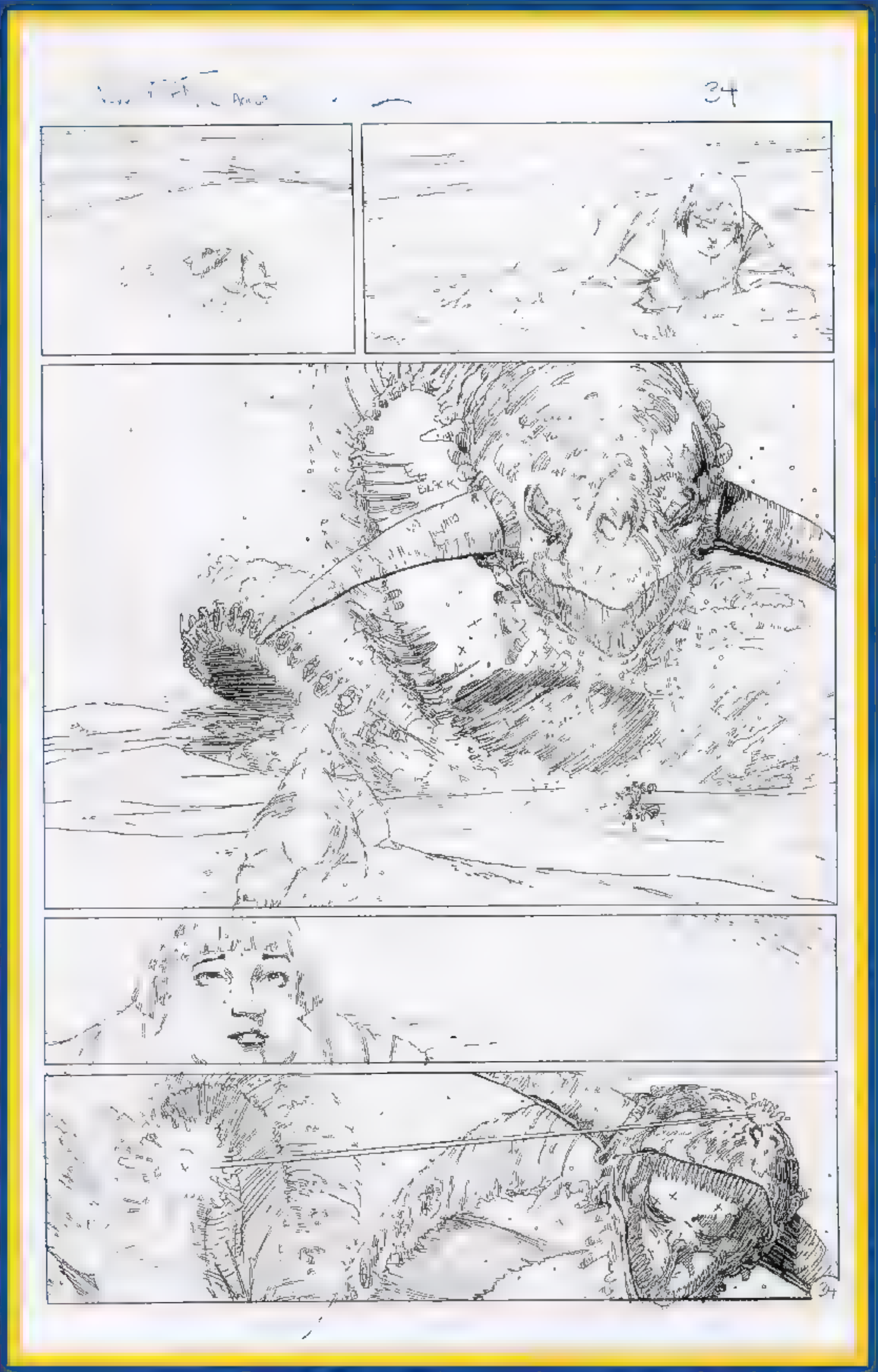
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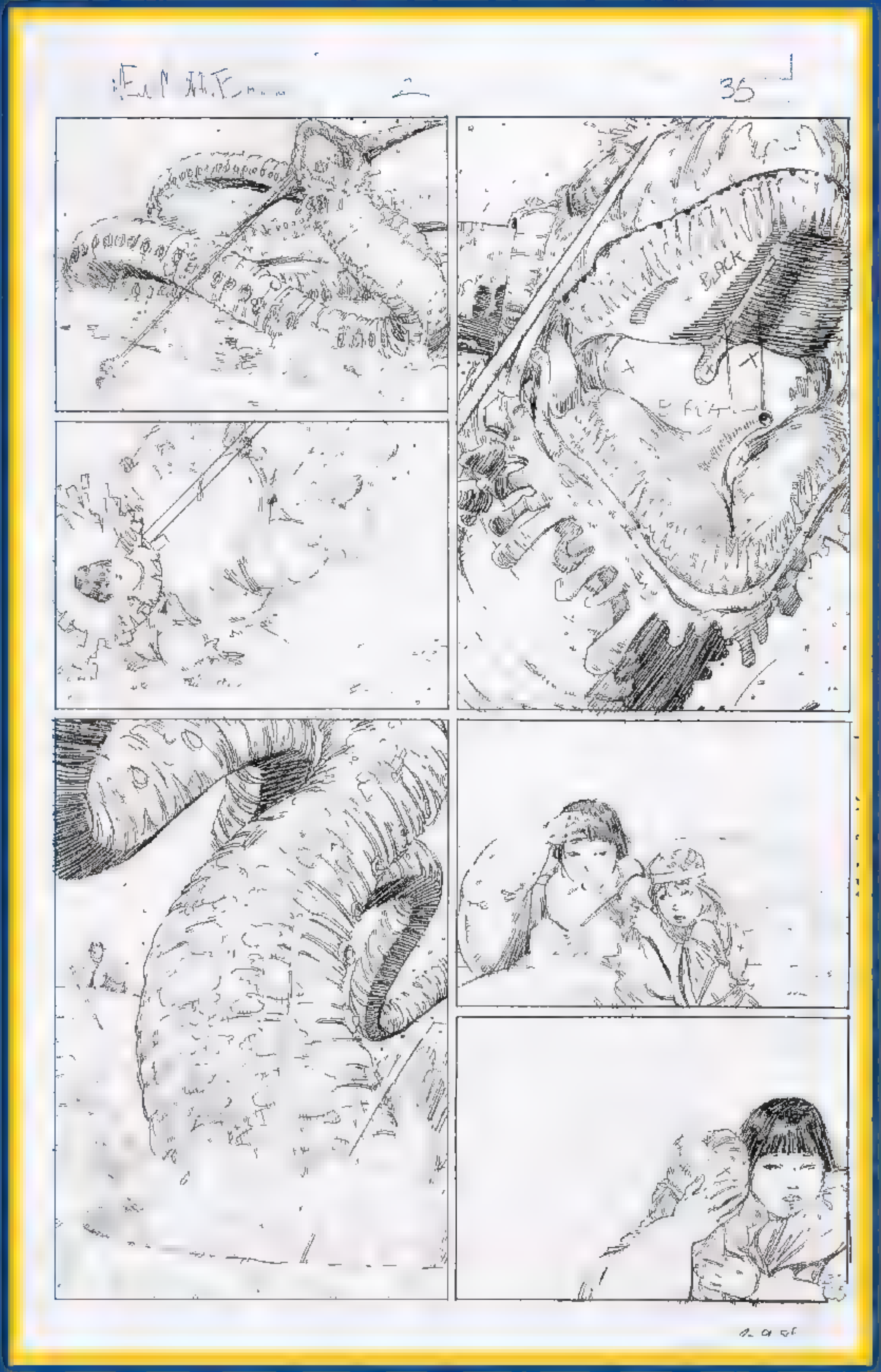
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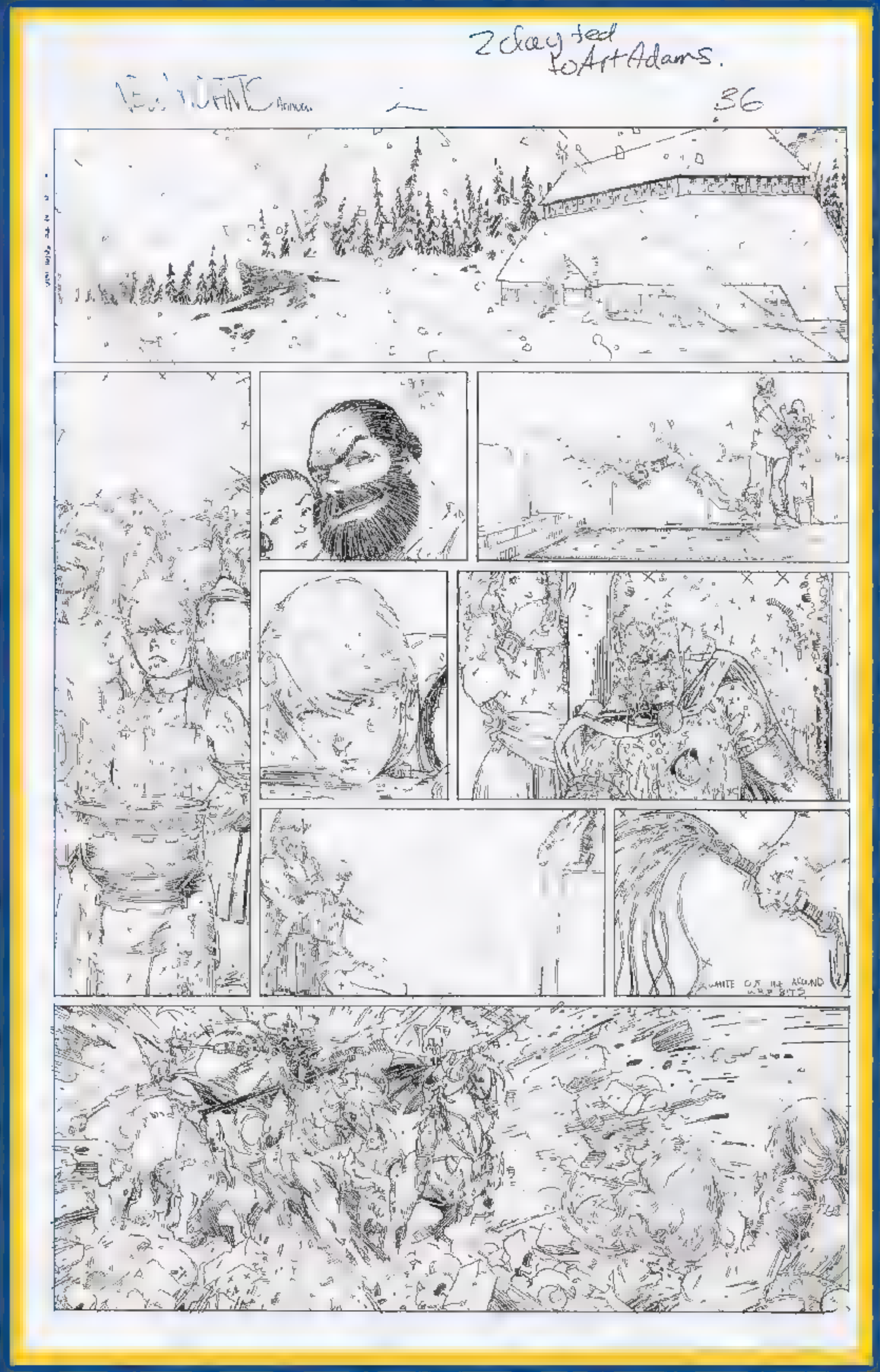
2 day fed to Art Adams.
NEW MUTANTS Annual 2
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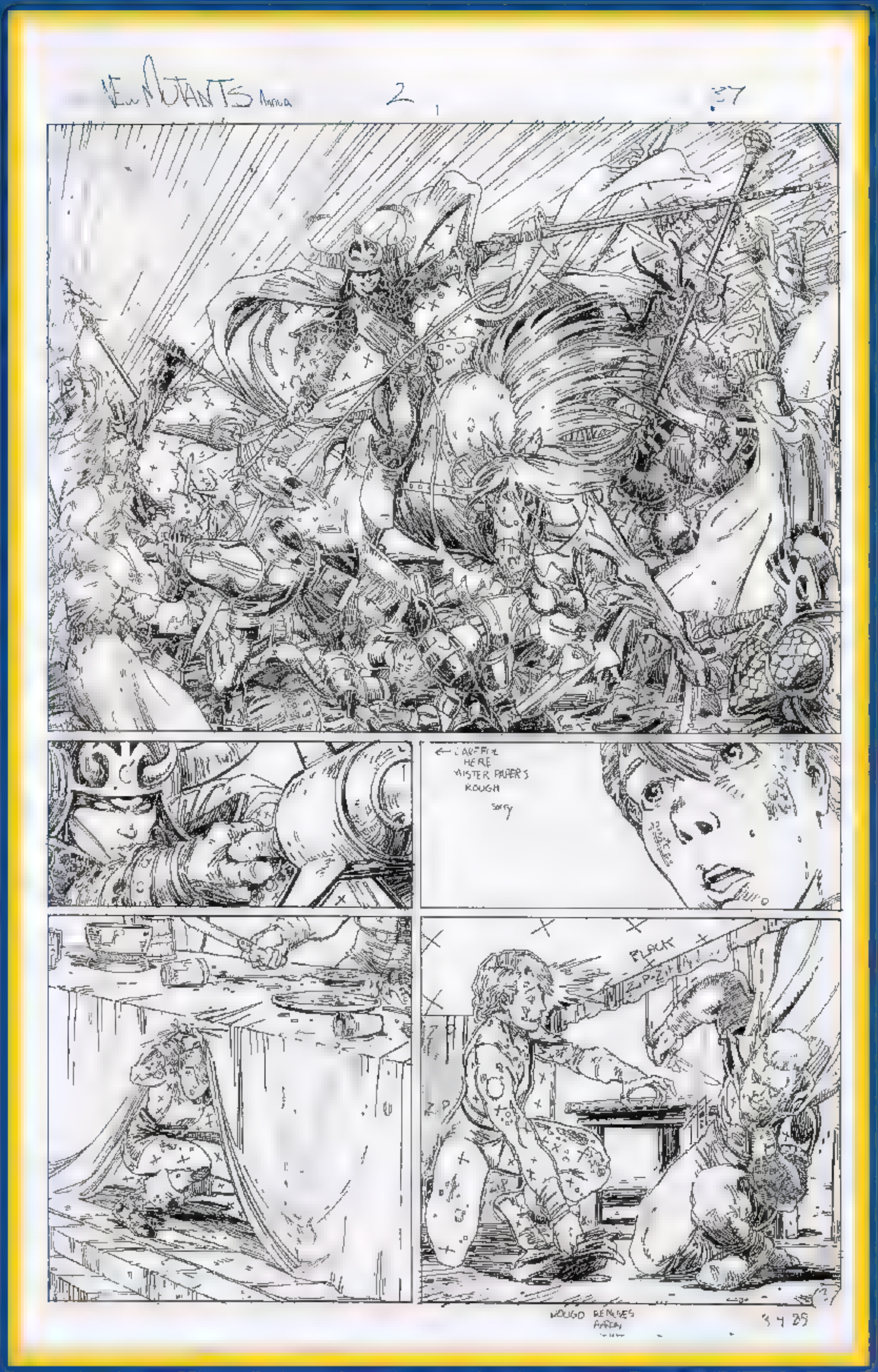
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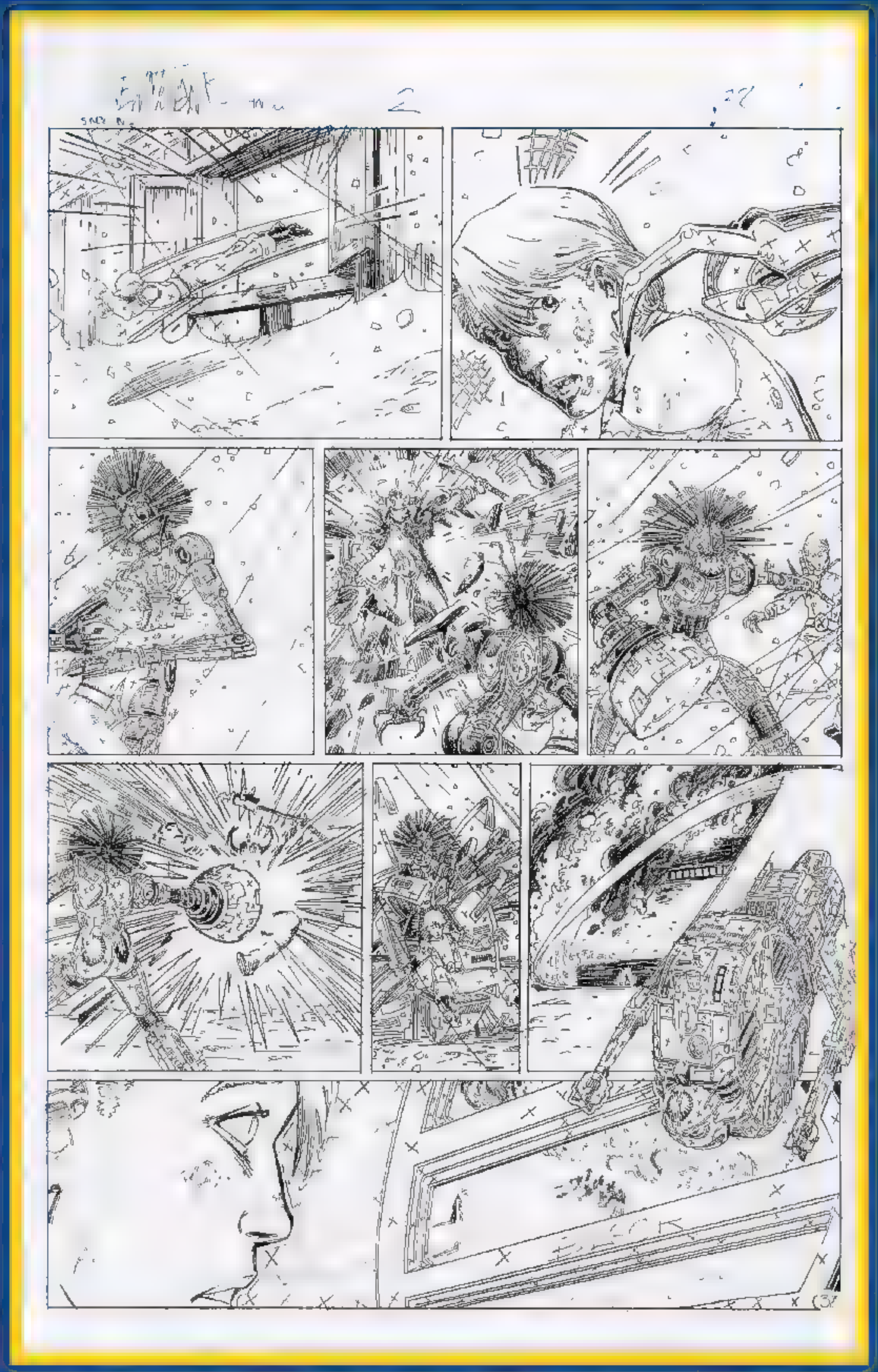
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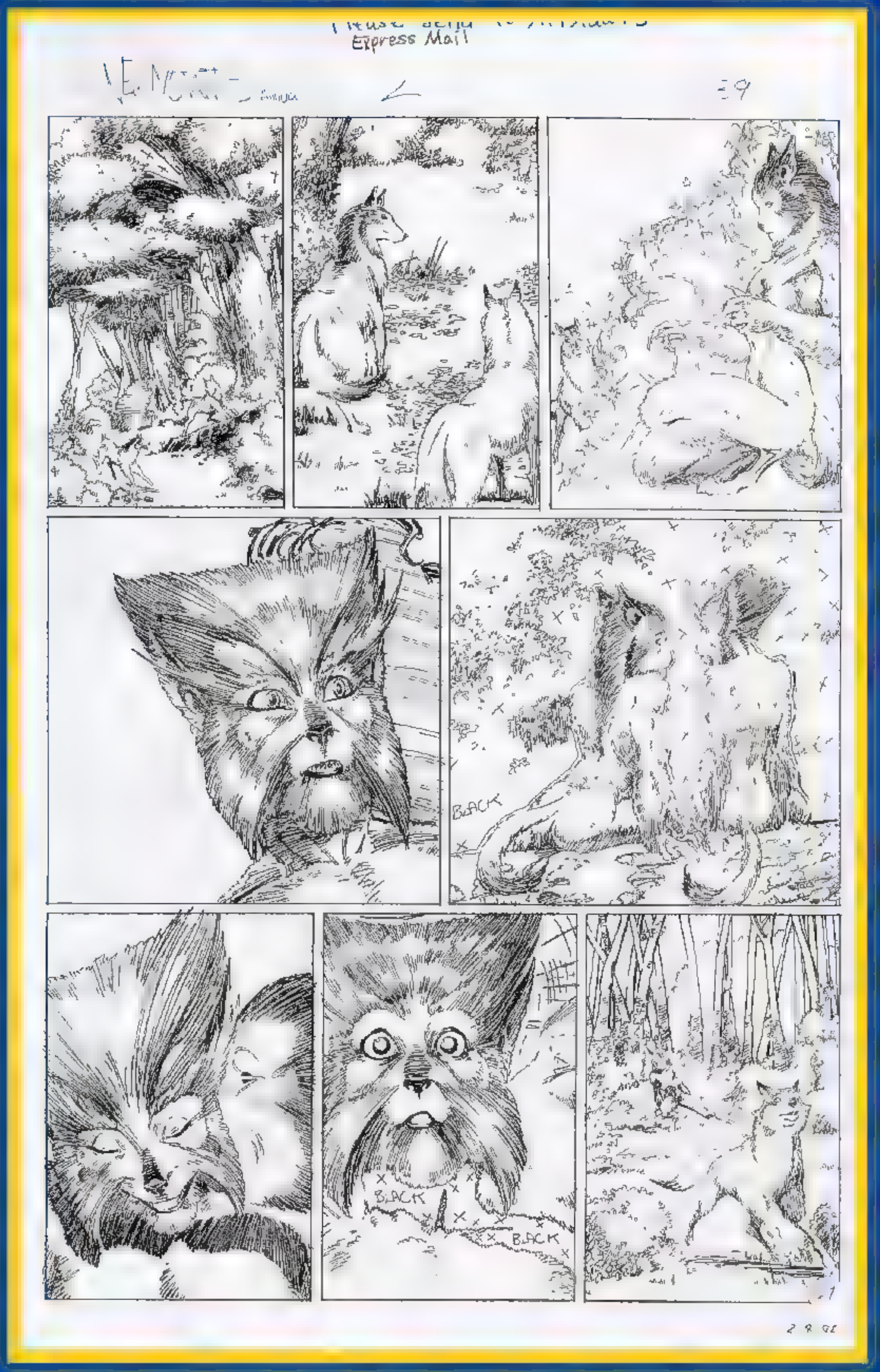
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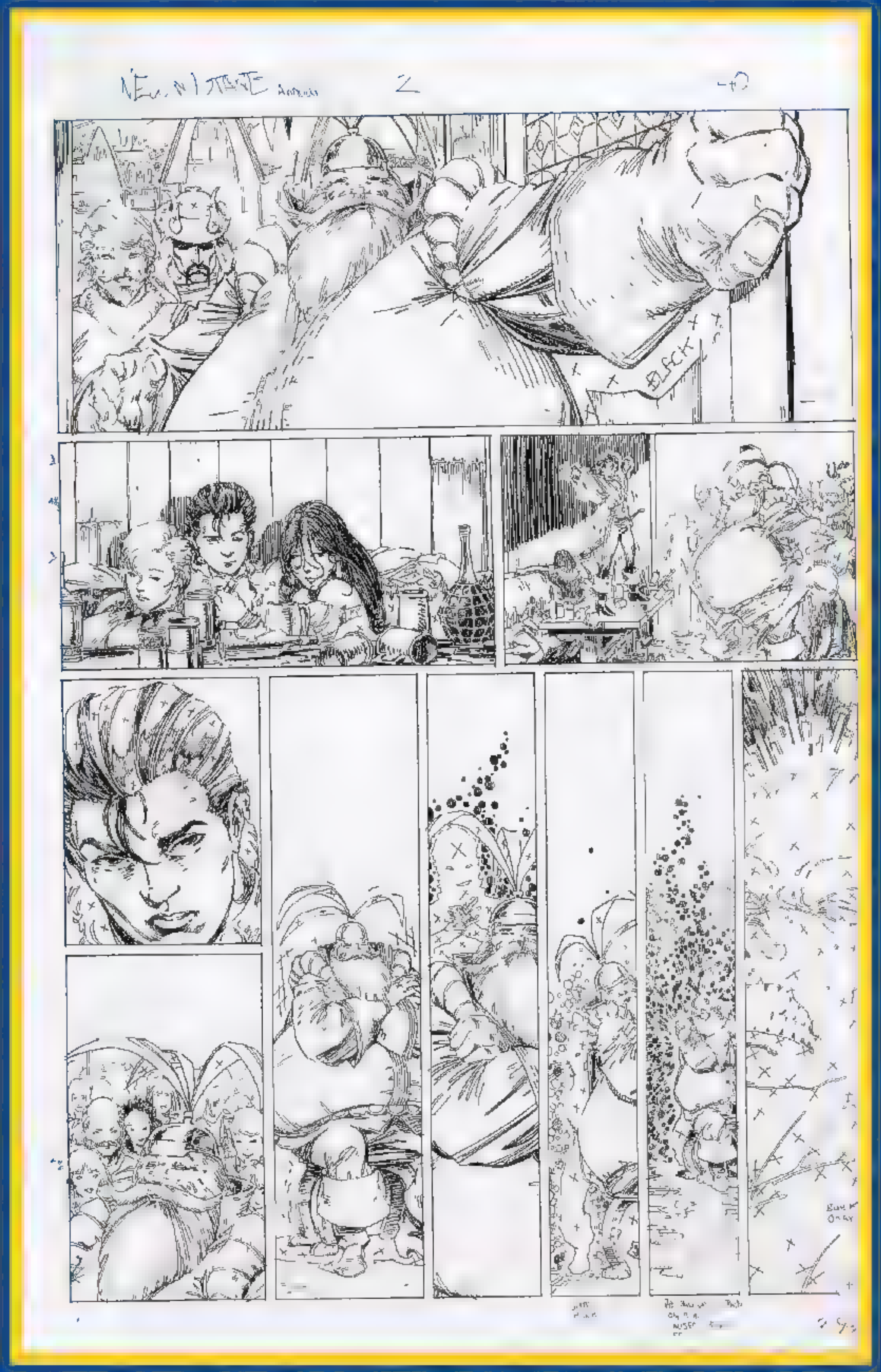
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NEW MUTANTS
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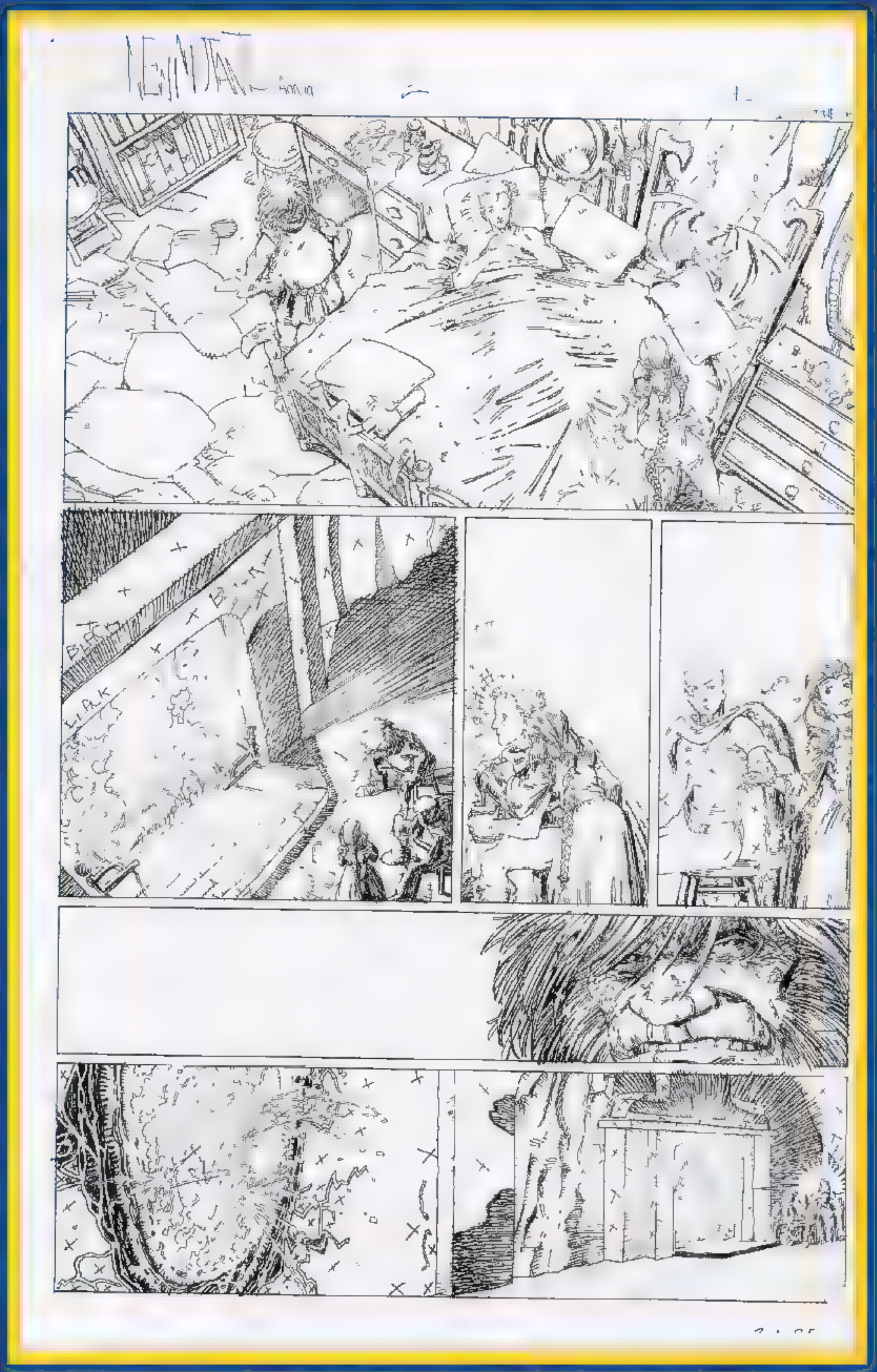

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NEW MUTANTS Annual
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47

NEW MUTANTS Annual
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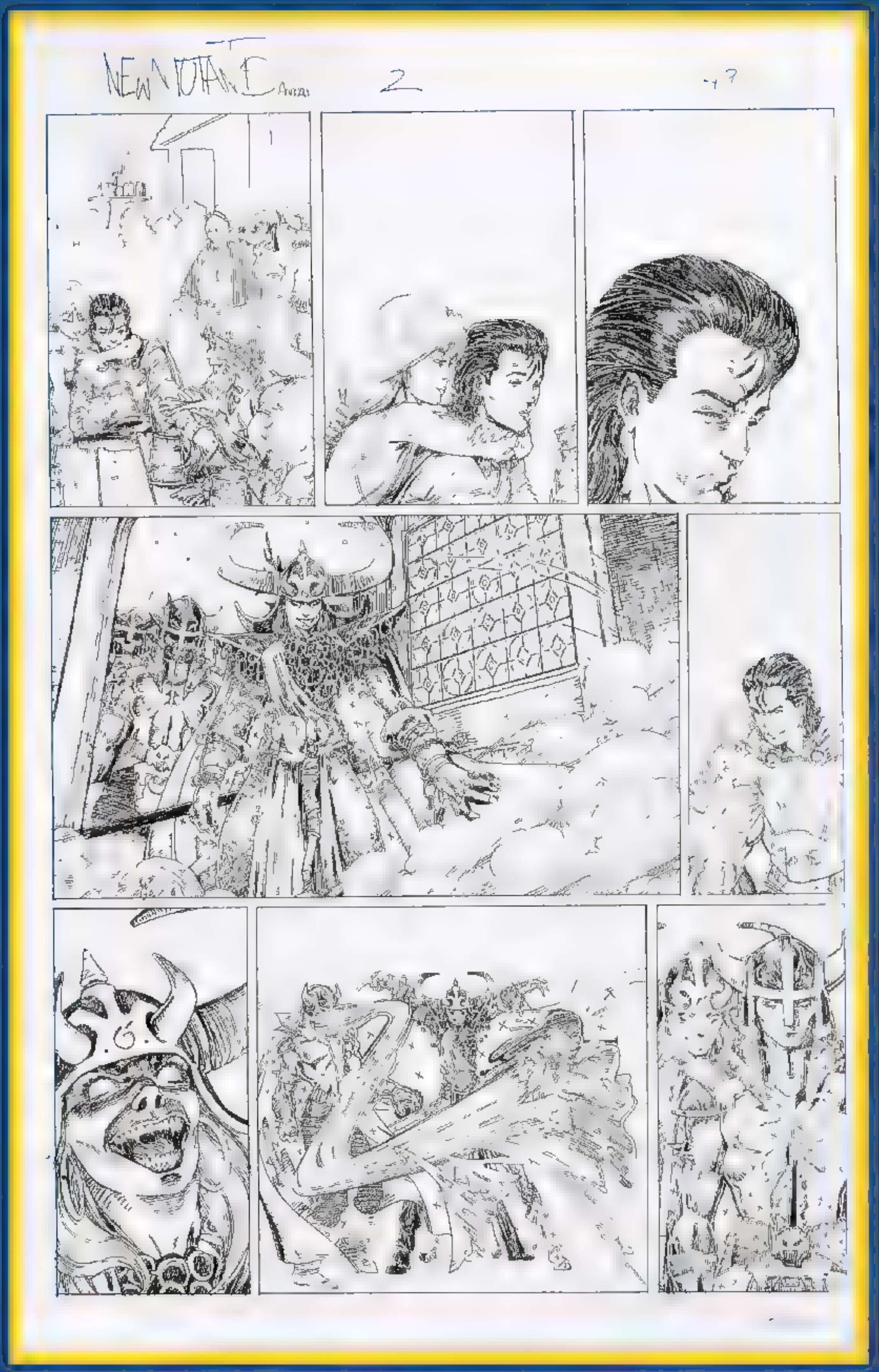
48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NEW MUTANTS Annual

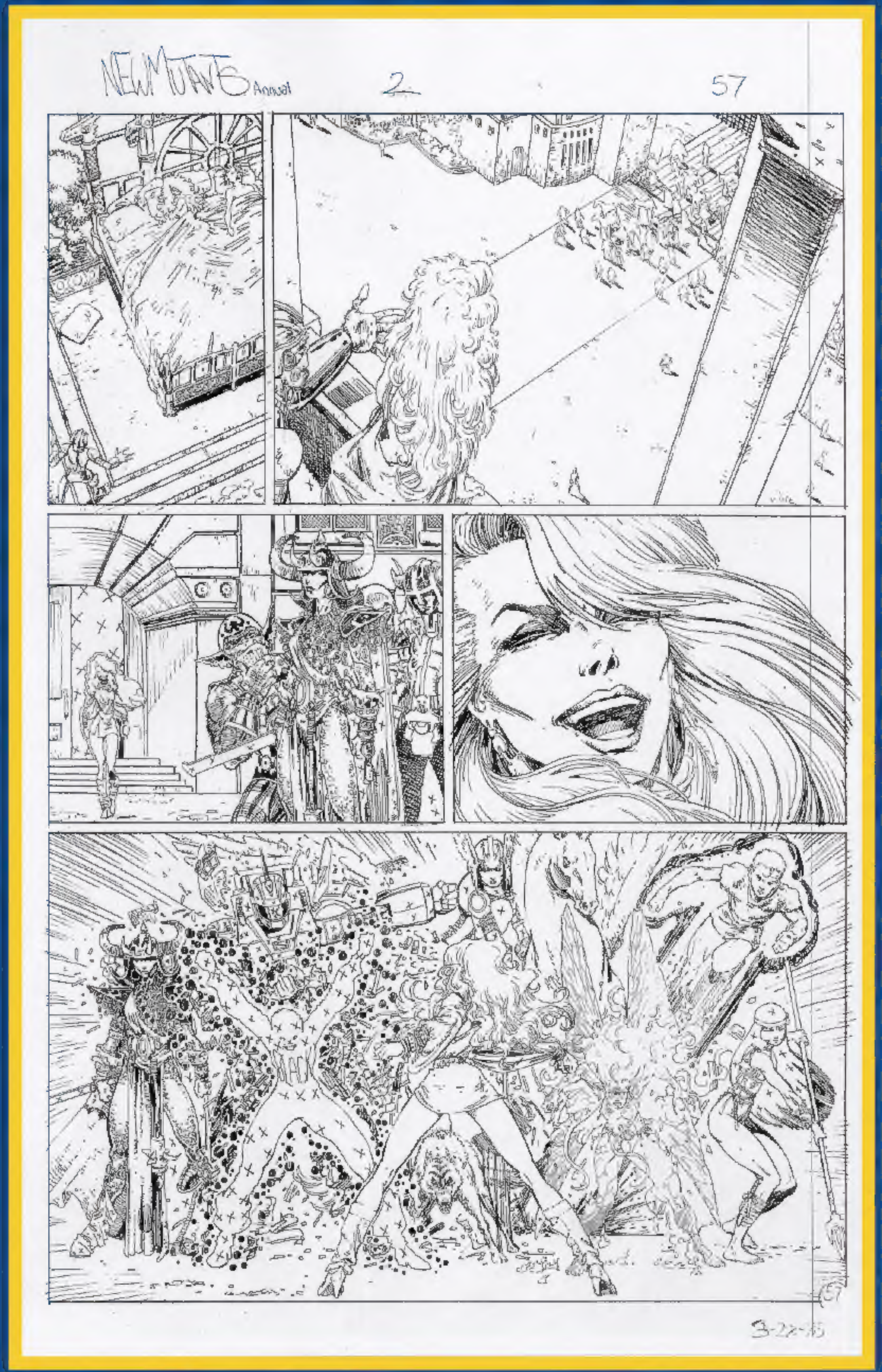
NEW MUTANTS Annual
FERR , EVEN 2 K PATTERN OVER
FORE GROUND STUFF HORSE LEG

NEW MUTANTS Annual 2
51
3-18-85

1st Class Art Adams

NEW MUTANTS Annual 2

MUTANTS Annual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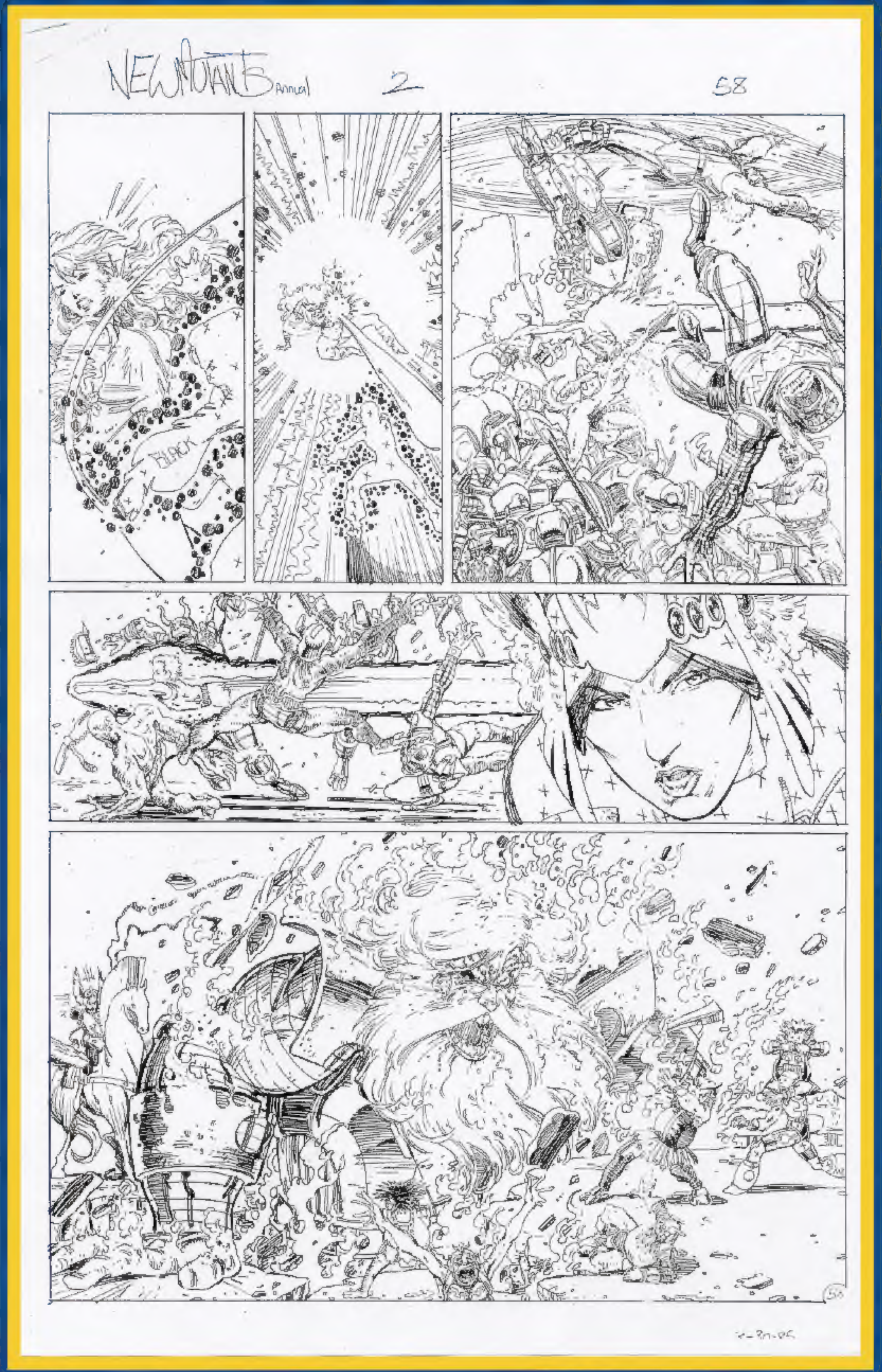
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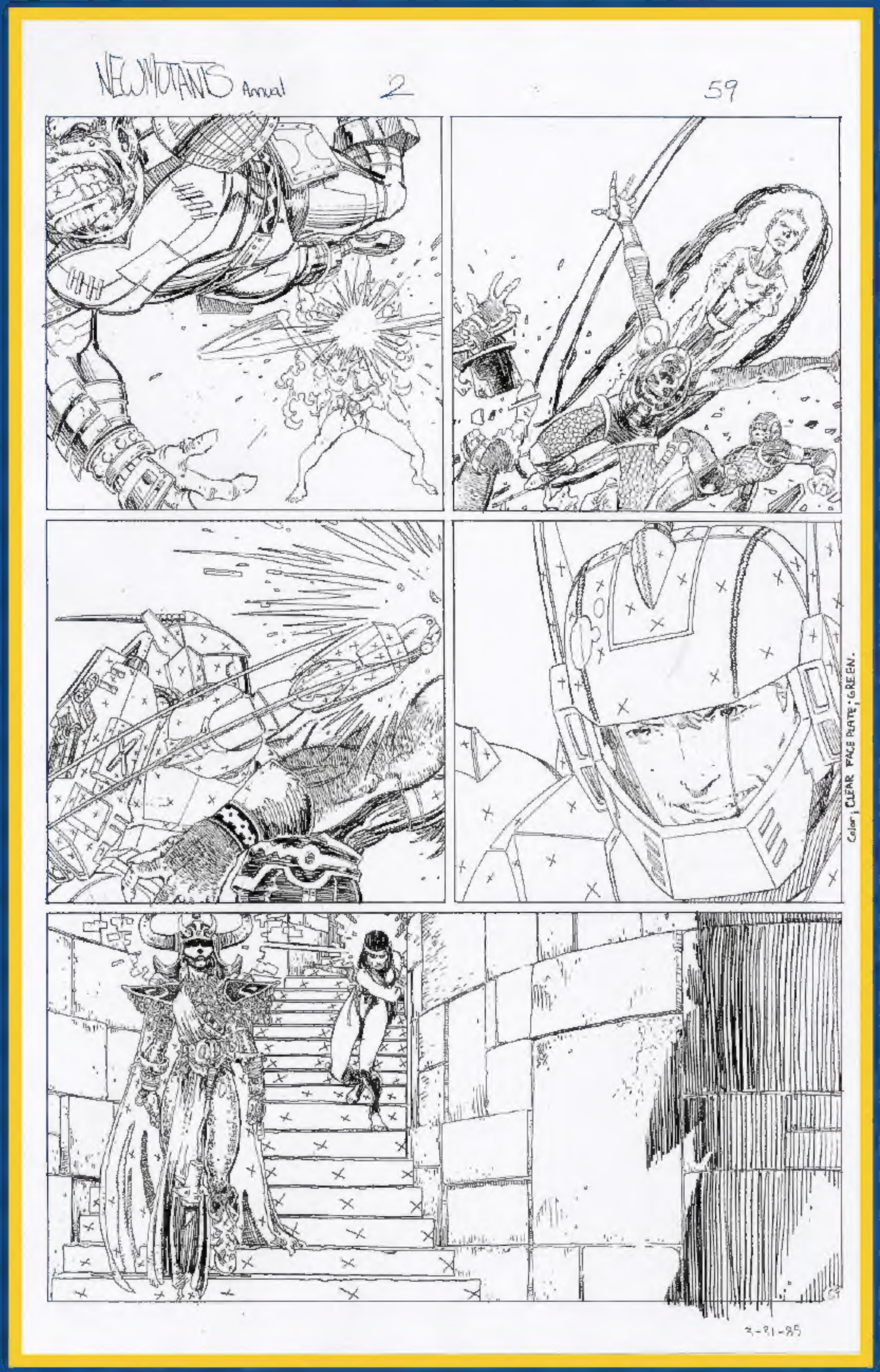
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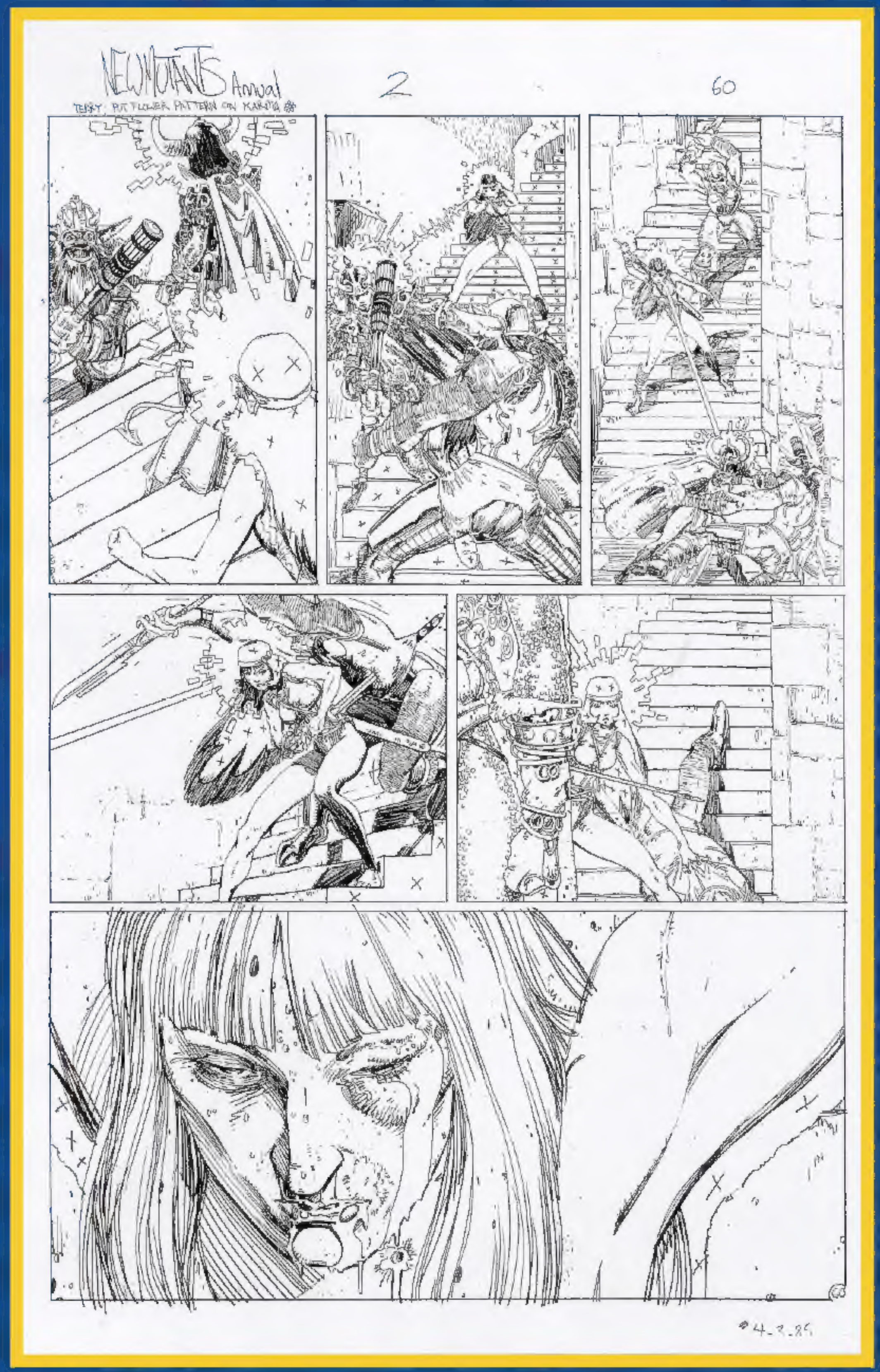
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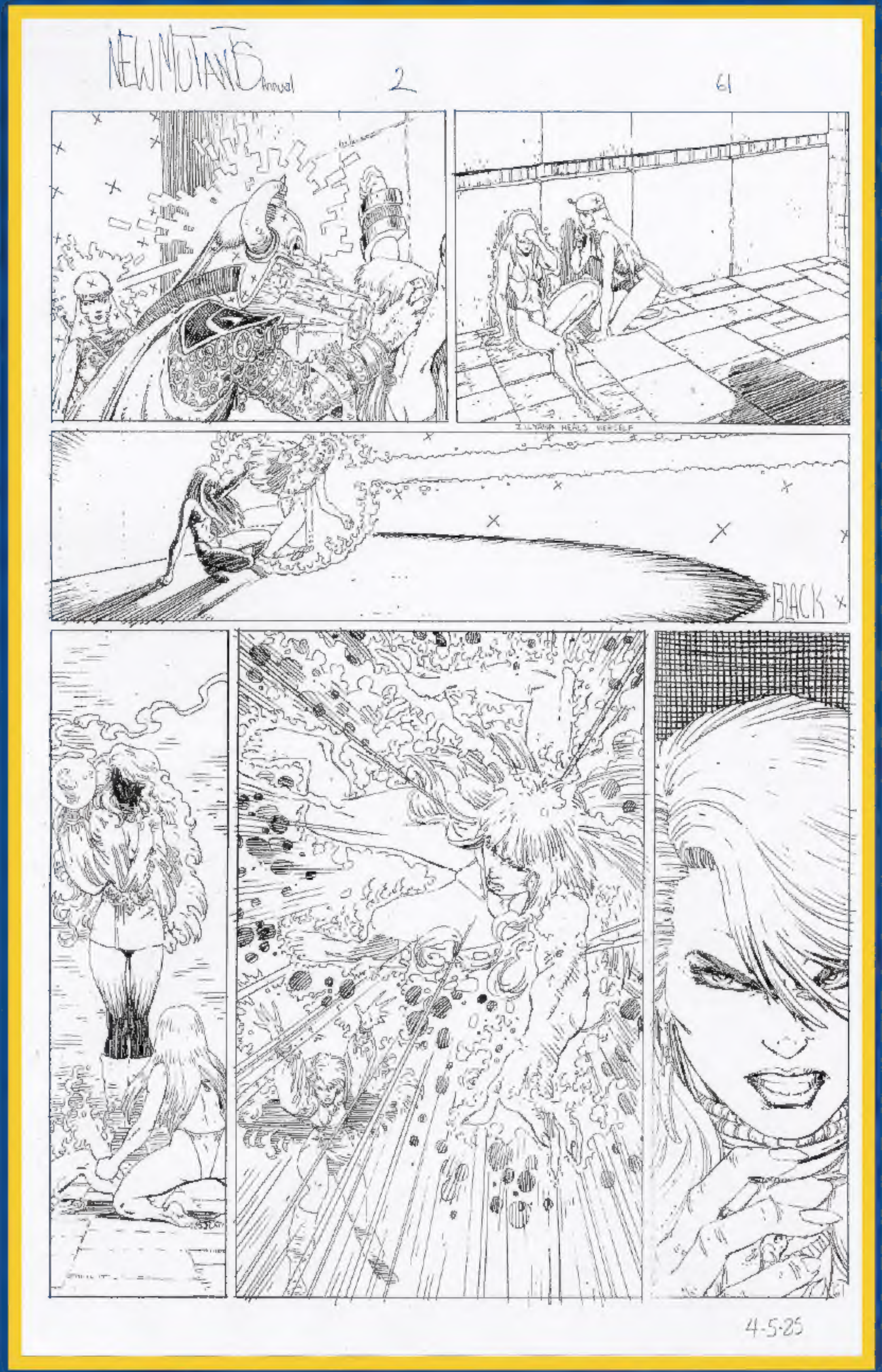
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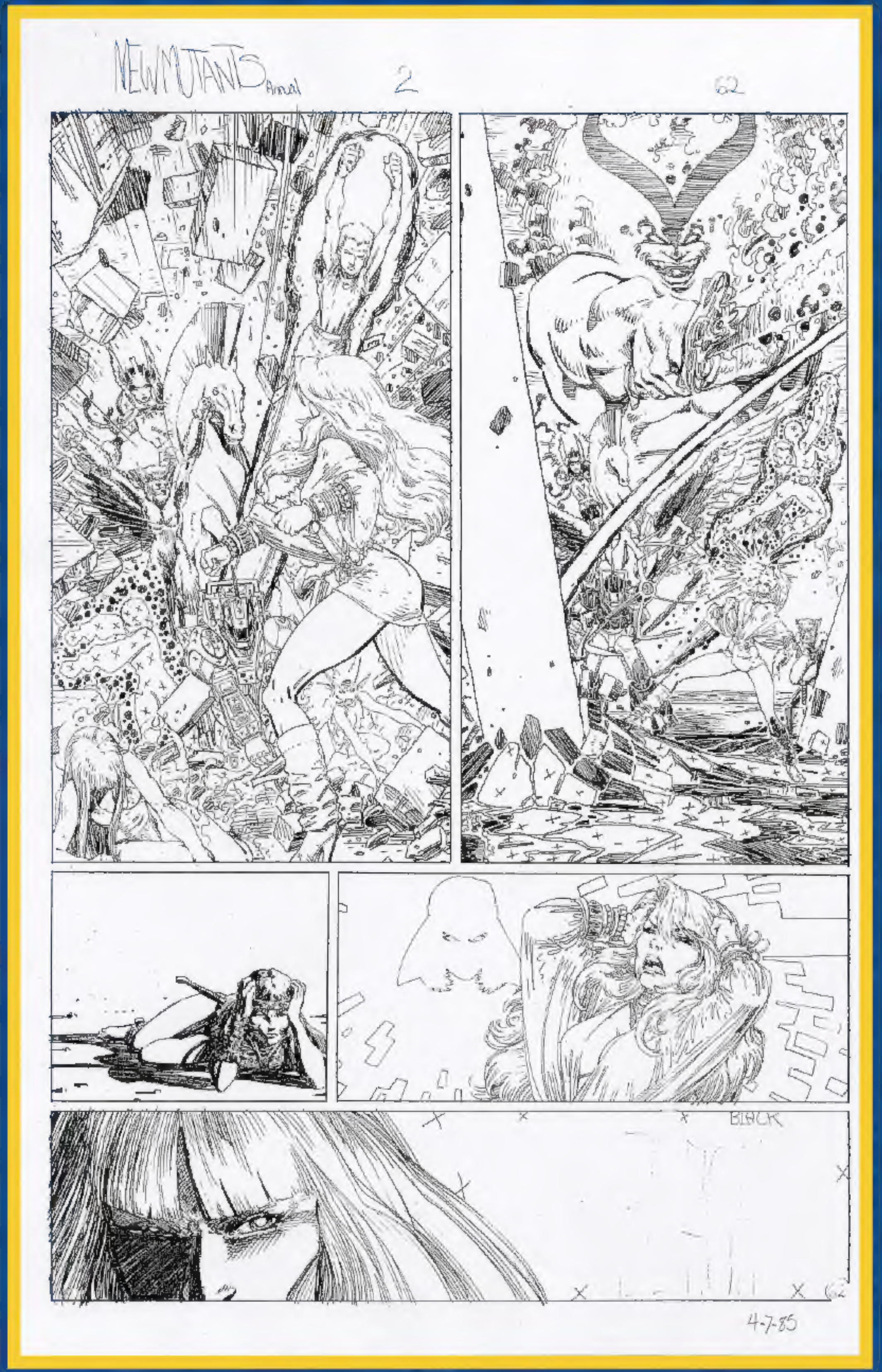
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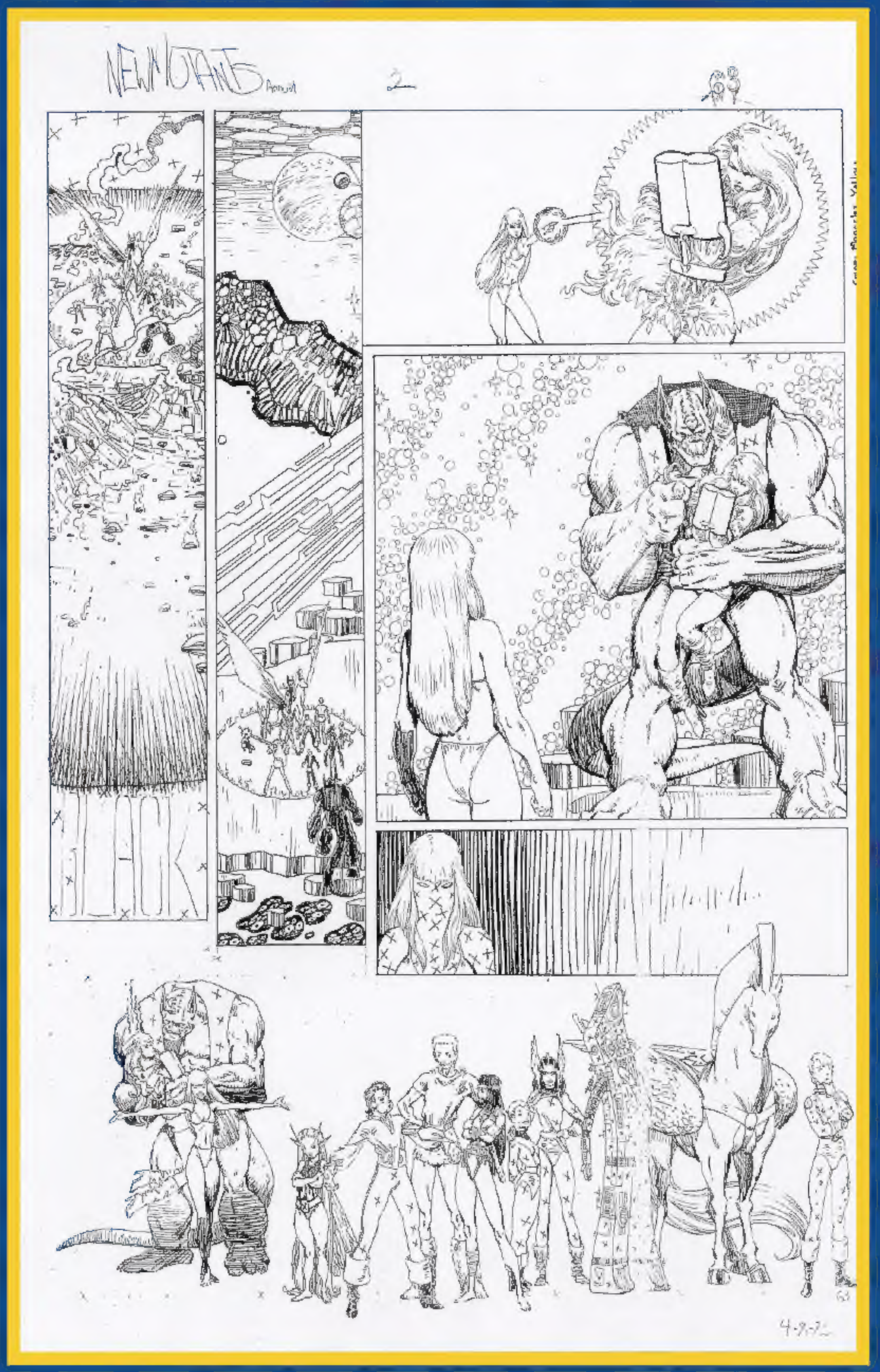
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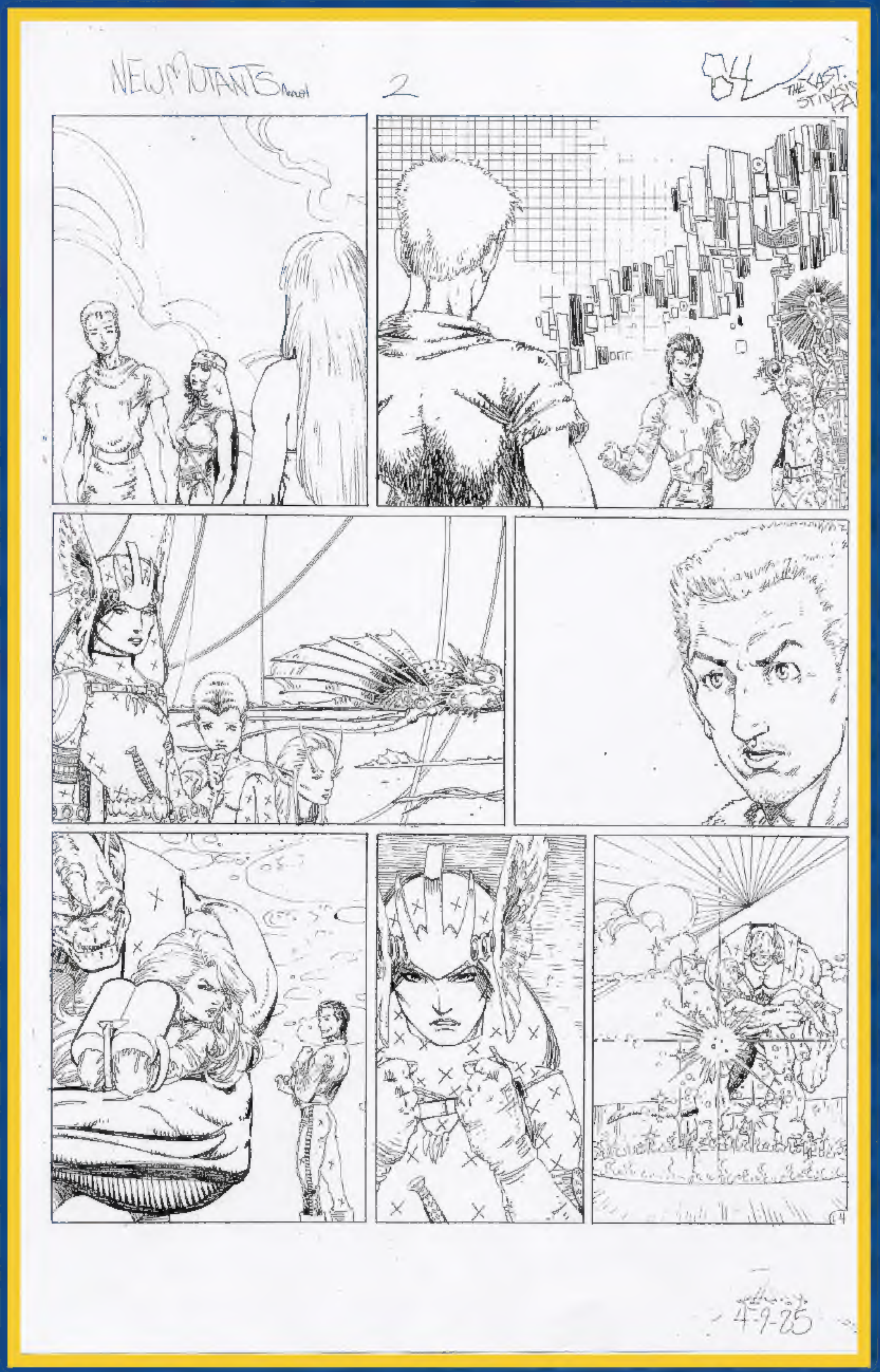
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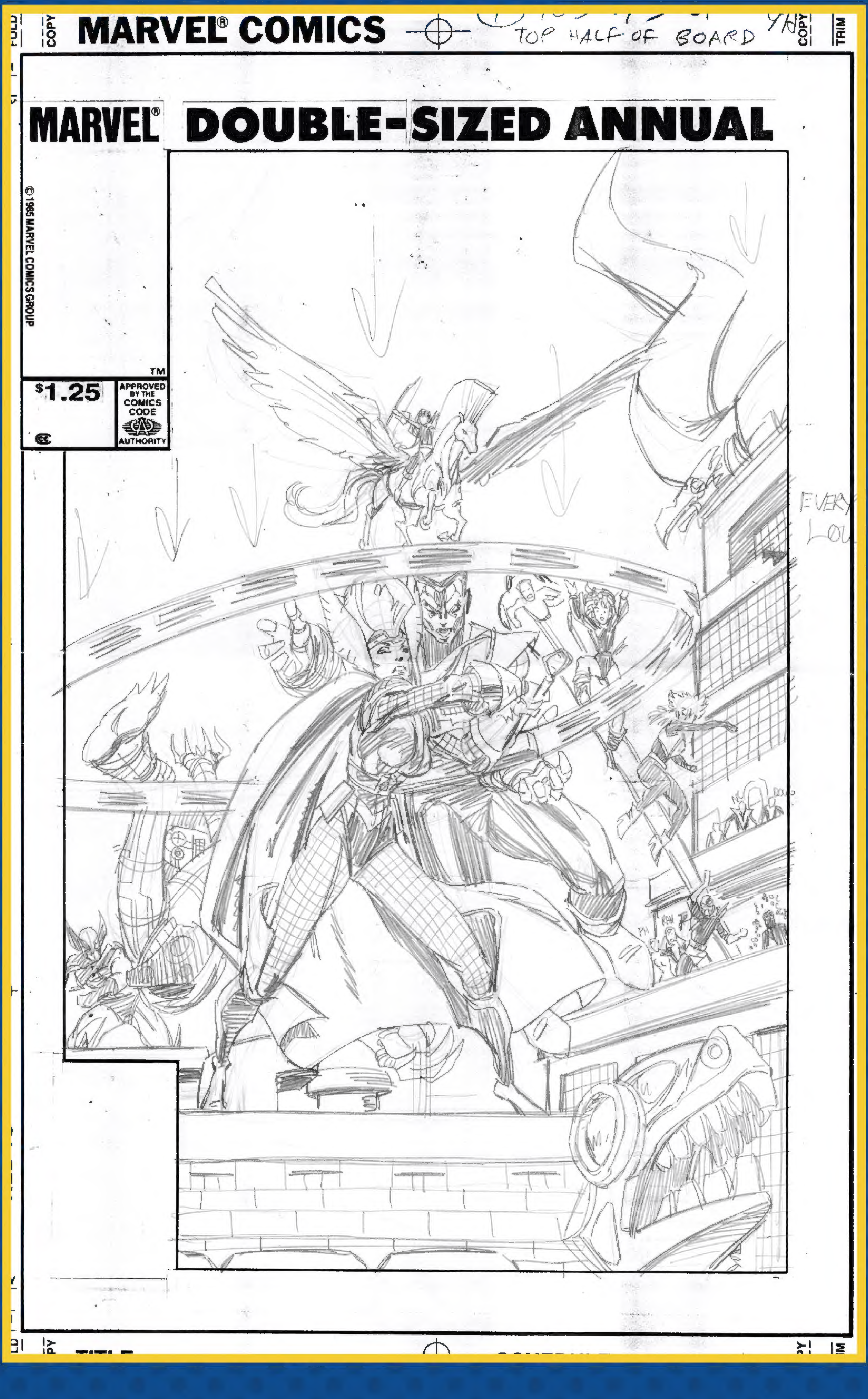
X-Men Annual #9 cover pencils by Arthur Adams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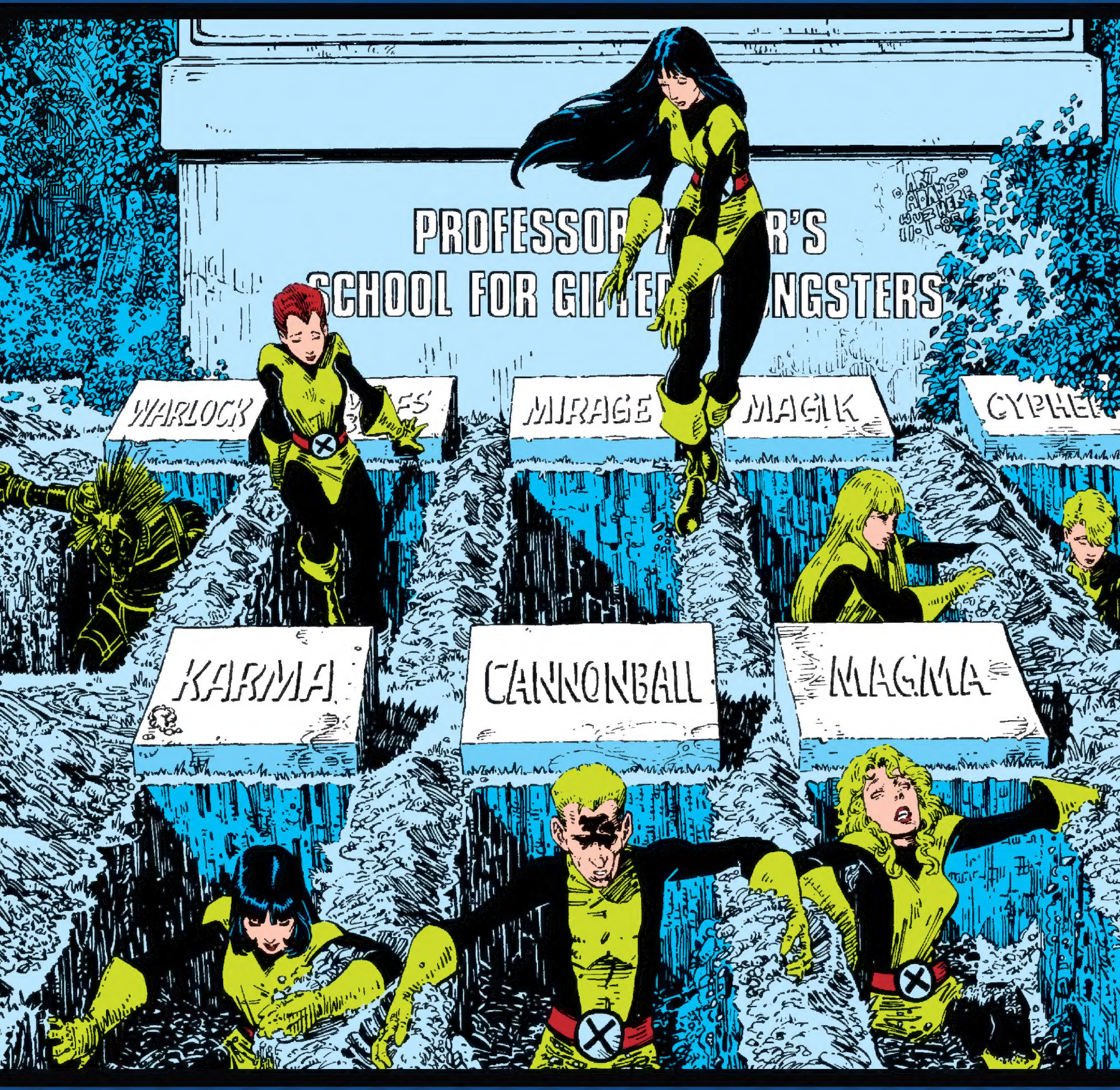
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SCHOOL FOR GIFTE
NGSTERS
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KARMA
CANNONBALL
MAGMA
ART ADAMS WILSHIRE 11-1-85

Mutantkind's best class takes a road trip via the Rainbow Bridge to Asgard and medieval magic madness, with evil god Loki to guide them to all the wrong places! Then, it's back to class under a new schoolmaster: the master of magnetism, Magneto! The ex-terrorist has turned teacher to atone for his crimes, but even if the New Mutants and the guest-starring X-Men trust him, the Avengers will be much tougher to convince! Featuring the Beyonder, Emma Frost and the Hellions!

Collecting *New Mutants Special Edition*, *Uncanny X-Men Annual #9* and *New Mutants #35-40* — written by beloved X-Men author Chris Claremont, with art by Arthur Adams, Mary Wilshire, Rick Leonardi, Keith Pollard and Jackson Guice.

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